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Worldwide Report

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

No. 392



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WHEAT, OTHER CROPS HIT BY WEATHER; HUGE LOSSES PREDICTED

\$1-Billion Loss

Canberra THE AUSTRALIAN in English 12 Jan 83 p 1

[Article by Wio Joustra]

[Text] THE devastating effect of the drought has been highlighted by a forecast that \$1000 million will be wiped off the value of this season's wheat crop.

The Australian Wheatgrowers Federation predicted yesterday that the 1982-83 crop would be worth \$1500 million, compared with \$2500 million in the previous season.

The slump in value will occur despite a rise in the price of wheat from \$155 a tonne last year to \$168 a tonne this year.

The Bureau of Agricultural Economics yesterday confirmed its estimates that the crop this year will total 9 million tonnes — the smallest since 1972, and a drop of 7.33 million tonnes, or 45 per cent, on last year's yield.

But the three south-eastern States will produce only 2.53 million tonnes, the smallest yield from this region since 1957 and only a quarter of last year's output.

The disastrous yield in the eastern States is being partly offset nationally by a record crop in Western Australia, estimated at 5.7 million tonnes.

The following figures show how the drought has crippled the wheat industry:

NSW's wheat crop is estimated at 1.45 million tonnes, 75 per cent less than last year's good crop of 5.91 million.

WHEAT production in Victoria is now expected to reach

only 400 kilotonnes this season, just 16 per cent of last year's crop and the smallest since 1944.

IN Queensland the wheat crop is estimated at 760 kilotonnes, just over half last year's crop.

IN South Australia production is expected to reach 680 kilotonnes, only 40 per cent of last year's crop and the smallest since 1977.

The executive director of the Wheatgrowers Federation, Mr Ian Wearing, said yesterday: "Already we have seen the disastrous effects of the drought on the rural economy and on small businesses in the rural sector such as chemical, machinery, insurance and fertiliser companies."

"They have experienced huge drops in revenue, as illustrated by International Harvester going into receivership and Massey Ferguson reporting enormous losses."

The drought in the south-eastern States has been described officially as one of the worst in the past 100 years.

The director of the Bureau of Meteorology, Dr J.W. Zillerman, said on Monday the extent and severity of the drought justified that description.

Mr Wearing said that approximately one million people depended primarily on agriculture for their livelihood.

The effect of the downturn in the rural economy was now also beginning to be felt by retailers in a large number of country towns in the eastern

States.

"Even if it rains tomorrow, it won't break the financial drought these communities are faced with, because the farmers will not generate any income until December 1983 at the earliest," he said.

The bureau's estimate of a 9 million tonne overall wheat crop was the same as its November 1982 estimate.

Since then, small upward revisions to the Queensland and South Australian crop estimates have been offset by a slight fall in the West Australian crop.

Although yields in Western Australia have been a little less than expected earlier, that State's winter grain crop is assured of being a record.

The total crop is estimated at 7 million tonnes, representing more than 60 per cent of the nation's 11.54 million tonnes total winter cereals crop.

The estimated crop of winter grains for the three drought-affected south-eastern States is only 3.54 million tonnes, 74 per cent less than last year and the smallest combined output for the region since 1957.

Good harvesting weather, with little interruption from summer storms, has resulted in an unusually high proportion of the wheat crop meeting premium grade standards.

Western Australia is estimated to have produced about 69 per cent of the nation's oats crop.

Record Wheat Low

Melbourne THE AGE in English 12 Jan 83 p 3

[Article by Ken Haley]

[Text]

CANBERRA. — Victorian farmers grew less wheat last year than in any year since 1944 and only a tenth of the barley produced in the State was good enough to end up as beer malt.

Figures produced by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics yesterday show that Australia's wheat, barley and oat crops have been sliced almost in half by the drought.

Australian farmers grow less wheat last year than they had for 10 years. This year's crop is now expected to total nine million tonnes. Most of this was grown in Western Australia, the only State unaffected by drought.

The bureau said that Victoria's wheat production this season was expected to reach 400,000 tonnes, the smallest for 38 years and less than a sixth of last year's volume.

The State's indignities did not

end there: the bureau records that 53,000 tonnes of wheat were imported from New South Wales.

According to the bureau, wheat from the eastern States was of excellent quality because of the scarcity of summer storms, but this was one of the few bright spots in its report.

The combined Australian crop of barley and oats is now estimated to be 2.54 million tonnes, less than half last year's production.

Only a million tonnes of this came from south-eastern Australia.

The stark contrast between the West's bumper year and the fizzer in the rest of Australia was underscored by two more observations. Western Australia's winter grain crop was a record, and the south-eastern crop was only a quarter of last year's harvest, besides being the smallest since 1957.

Destruction of Fruit

Canberra THE AUSTRALIAN in English 12 Jan 83 p 3

[Text]

THE storm-damaged Stanthorpe area in south-east Queensland where millions of dollars' worth of stone fruit has been destroyed has been declared a natural disaster area.

State Cabinet made the move yesterday after having been told that more than 200 growers lost about 1.7 million boxes of fruit valued at \$12

million.

Primary producers will be able to borrow up to \$40,000 at 4 per cent interest as a result of the disaster declaration.

The Queensland Premier Mr Bjelke-Petersen said orchardists whose trees had been destroyed or severely damaged could be without worthwhile income for up to seven years.

CSO: 5000/7547

LEGAL, POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS MARK FRANKLIN DAM DISPUTE

Appeal for Federal Action

Melbourne THE AGE in English 7 Jan 83 p 11

[Editorial: "Why the Franklin Should Be Saved"]

[Excerpts] The televised confrontations in the Lower Gordon River rainforests are giving Australians a nightly reminder of what is at stake in the dams issue. And few would have been struck by its growing importance so forcefully as a Prime Minister planning an election in which one of the issues looks like running strongly against him.

The dams issue is now, with the economy, the most potent single issue in Australian politics and it is becoming more so every month. Even if the impressive muscle of the conservation movement could shift only 1 percent of votes and preferences from Liberal to Labor, this might be enough to change the Government. The Fraser Government is in a dilemma. It will suffer in Tasmania if it intervenes to stop the dam; it will suffer in the rest of Australia if it doesn't intervene. And it has little time left to choose.

For three years we have argued against the dam, and called on the Federal Government to intervene if necessary to stop it being built. We have taken this stand not because of any animosity to Tasmania or Tasmanians, or because we are indifferent to Tasmania's need for cheap electricity, or because we want to conserve everything, everywhere. The point of our opposition is that the country where the dam would be built is something magnificent. Whether you call it our national heritage, the world heritage, or, in Eric Reece's homely phrase, one of "the things you want to keep," it is too important for future generations to be thus destroyed. Mankind needs more than just cheap electricity.

It is said that there is no alternative to the proposed dam. That is palpably untrue. Tasmania has enough coal to fuel its own power station--relatively poor coal, admittedly, but then Victoria's brown coal was dismissed as too poor to use until we showed that it could be done.

It is said that the environment is purely a State issue, of no legitimate concern to the Federal Government. The Fraser Government's own past actions give the lie to this view.

From 1975 on, it has pledged to help in setting up a national park of world importance in southwest Tasmania, and has taken numerous actions towards this, culminating in the region being listed as a World Heritage area. It is a signatory to the World Heritage Convention, and has legal obligations to protect the area under this and its own national heritage legislation.

Perhaps the saddest thing about this whole issue is that so few Tasmanians, and so few of their leaders, have tried to see the issue from both sides. Hardly any Tasmanian politicians have been to see the river they are proposing to flood. The Premier, Mr Gray, who has never set foot in the area, has nonetheless dismissed this gorgeously scenic river as "a brown ditch, leech-ridden, unattractive to the majority of people." His Government is so bent on rejecting any alternative it has even reversed its predecessor's decision to require new homes to be insulated. It has stopped the HEC from converting the Bell Bay power station from oil to coal firing, lest this create the impression that coal could be an alternative to flooding the Franklin. If the States rights view is accepted, these are the men (for men they all are) who are the trustees of our national heritage, and whose decisions should not be challenged by the national Government.

Australia demands something better. In the beauty of those rainforests, in the grandeur of those mountain valleys, their haunting mists, their spectacular cliffs, rapids and beautiful vegetation, there is something Australia should preserve untouched for all time.

Risk to Liberal MP's

Melbourne THE AGE in English 13 Jan 83 pp 1, 8

[Article by Michael Gordon, Canberra, and Richard Guilliat, Melbourne: "Marginal Seats Will Be at Risk, Survey Shows"]

[Excerpt] The Federal Government's refusal to block the damming of the Franklin River could cost it several marginal seats in the next election, according to a poll in four Federal electorates.

The poll, conducted by Spectrum Research for the Australian Conservation Foundation, suggests that the Government would lose the seats of Casey and Chisholm in Victoria and Phillip in New South Wales.

Almost 30 percent of voters said the Government's stand on the dams issue would influence their vote, and more than 10 percent disapproved of the Government's stand and described themselves as swinging voters.

The survey results are certain to surprise the Federal Government. The average swing in the seats polled was more than 2 percent--the margin the ALP needs to win the 1983 election.

Both the Australian Conservation Foundation and the Tasmanian Wilderness Society will campaign strongly against Government members in marginal seats at the election.

The society's director, Dr Bob Brown, predicted yesterday that his organisation would have a bigger presence in the marginal seats than the main parties.

Dr Brown said planning had already begun for the campaign, which would be designed to "bring down the Fraser government, if that is the cost of saving the Franklin River."

Meanwhile, the blockade protest in the south-west began to turn ugly yesterday with the first incidence of violent injury and accusations of "dirty tricks" by the Tasmanian authorities.

In yesterday's incidents:

--Another 40 people were arrested while trying to block the loading of a bulldozer on to a barge at Strahan wharf.

--The Wilderness Society accused authorities of cutting telex and telephone lines to its Strahan office and jamming its two-way radio in the early hours of Wednesday morning.

--Tasmanian Government and police authorities said they were outraged by the allegation and described it as a publicity stunt.

--Rocks were thrown at the society's Strahan headquarters three times on Wednesday morning, one of them gashing a youth's forehead.

Dr Brown said yesterday's incidents marked a significant change in the attitude of police to the blockade. He said as well as the cut telephone and telex lines, police had blocked off the road to the society's base camp, and about 10 public telephones in Strahan and Queenstown were out of order for 1½ hours.

Dr Brown said it was unfortunate that Tasmanian police, who had had a good reputation until now, were being pressured politically.

'AGE' Blast at Anthony

Melbourne THE AGE in English 13 Jan 83 p 11

[Text] **T**HE Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Anthony, raised the hopes of conservationists on Monday when he visited the new coal find east of Launceston. From comments made by him at the time, it seemed that the Federal Government might try to seek a compromise solution to the Gordon-below-Franklin dam controversy. But the following day Mr Anthony put paid to that suggestion. The dam, he said, was "irrevocable now". For good measure he added: "This dam will be built and I hope no more will be built."

This is pious nonsense, and the Government and Mr Anthony know it is. There is nothing irrevocable about the dam. There is nothing imperative about the dam. Work on the access road has barely started. It will be another three years before work begins on the dam itself. Any time between now and then the Tasmanian Government could call a halt. The reason why it hasn't done so before now is its blind faith in hydro-electric power, and its determination not to consider alternative forms of energy. Never mind that the result could be the destruction of what was described by the

World Heritage Committee as "a property of outstanding universal value".

If the Tasmanian Government won't act responsibly, there is nothing for it. The Federal Government must step in and take the issue into its own hands. It has a mandate to do so from the World Heritage Committee. It would also have the backing of most Australians. In the wilderness area of south-west Tasmania the Prime Minister, Mr Fraser, has said we have "an irreplaceable asset". Mr Fraser should see that the dam is stopped, and that this priceless piece of the world's heritage is preserved intact for future generations.

Protest Activities

Canberra THE AUSTRALIAN in English 14 Jan 83 p 3

[Article by Sue Downie: "Fishing Boat Ploughs Through Dam Protesters"]

[Excerpts]

A FISHING boat towing a barge carrying a 40-tonne bulldozer ploughed through a group of protesters in boats on the Gordon River yesterday.

The protesters were trying to stop the barge reaching the Franklin dam construction site in south-west Tasmania.

Five boats were thrown aside by the weight of the Kate Martin, hired by the Hydro-Electric Commission to take the bulldozer to Warners Landing to clear rainforest and prepare roads.

Witnesses said police escorting the barge made no attempt to clear the line of 20 rubber dinghies and that the boat made no attempt to slow down.

More than 45 protesters were arrested for obstructing police and for trespassing. None was

injured in the incident, but the Tasmanian Wilderness Society is taking legal action against the skipper of the Kate Martin, the director, Dr Bob Brown, said yesterday.

Appeal

In a separate move, the wilderness society will make a Supreme Court challenge today against the granting of bail with and without conditions to protesters arrested for obstruction and trespassing on HEC land.

More than 400 protesters have been arrested since the campaign to save the Franklin River began in the south-west before Christmas and all have been charged with trespassing on HEC land or obstructing police.

Concern for Artifacts

Canberra THE AUSTRALIAN in English 14 Jan 83 p 3

[Excerpt]

VALUABLE archaeological material in caves to be flooded by the Franklin dam could not be preserved, the Federal Government was warned yesterday.

The Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material said the Government should stop the dam project to reassess the situation.

The institute claims to be the only organisation representing experts on conservation, restoration and preservation of material constituting the national heritage.

Its president, Mr Ian Cook,

said the Minister for Home Affairs and the Environment, Mr McVeigh, "has clearly been given bad advice" on the scientific options available to preserve archaeological material in the caves.

But a spokesman for Mr McVeigh said the Minister had merely suggested archaeological material could be preserved and that the Government was considering a report on how this could be done.

The Government was committed to supporting financially any program for preservation of archaeological material from the caves, he said.

Objections to Arrests

Melbourne THE AGE in English 17 Jan 83 p 3

[Article by Prue Innes: "Bail Rules Have No Precedent: Society"]

[Excerpts]

Bail conditions being imposed on Franklin dam opponents are unprecedented in Australia, according to the Tasmanian Wilderness Society.

There are now about 60 men and women in Hobart's Risdon jail, basically because they have been charged with walking on to land under the control of the Hydro-Electric Commission.

A spokesman for the society, Mr Lincoln Siliakus, says the authorities are panicking over the blockade. "If it weren't for the political overtones, these people would never be going to jail," Mr Siliakus said.

"The authorities see this blockade as being a phenomenal success, and entirely peaceful, and they believe by going in the way they are, they can prevent it. They don't realise that by going the way they are, we are getting more people to come to

Tasmania than they can possibly arrest," he said.

A Melbourne criminal barrister said of the arrests: "This is on a scale that has never been heard of before in this country."

He said the people arrested were not armed robbers or heroin dealers, but people who had a belief and were acting fairly peacefully.

"What we pride ourselves on in this community is the right to protest. What we say makes us different from more authoritarian regimes is the right to our own point of view," he said.

"We are not talking about Germany in the 1930s, or Siberia and the Gulag Archipelago. We are talking about a State Government that says you have got to do what we want, you can't go where we say, and if you make your point, they take away your freedom, and they are doing so on a scale that has never been done before."

A variety of conditions has been imposed on protesters being released on bail after being charged with trespass.

These range from a defender not being allowed to enter, remain upon, trespass, lurk, loiter or secrete himself in the protest area, to be ordered to leave the Strahan area immediately, and even, in one case, by a specified route.

Mr Siliakus said that no matter how many protesters were arrested, many people were still coming to the Gordon River area to join the protest and the attempt by authorities to create fear in mainland blockaders was failing abysmally.

Gray Slap at Protesters

Melbourne THE AGE in English 17 Jan 83 p 3

[Text]

The Tasmanian Premier, Mr Gray, yesterday condemned criticisms of police by the Tasmania Wilderness Society, which he described as "a rag-bag collection of mainland unemployed coming here to disrupt our lifestyle".

Mr Gray said the anti-dam protesters had relied on police for protection but had also bitterly criticised them and had accused them of sabotaging society telephone wires last week.

He said that for the society to start a campaign against police at the dam site was "nothing short of contemptible arrogance".

"There has been nothing but tolerance and even-handedness in the way which the police have performed their duties and rational Tasmanians would be proud of them," Mr Gray said.

CSO: 5000/7545

YOUNG LIBERALS PASS ENVIRONMENTAL RESOLUTION, RAP DAM

Canberra THE AUSTRALIAN in English 12 Jan 83 p 2

[Article by John Stanton]

[Text]

ENVIRONMENTAL issues had become a "Trojan horse for the moral evil of centralism", the 15th National Young Liberal convention in Adelaide heard yesterday.

The claim came during heated debate over a controversial resolution, which was eventually passed by the convention, calling for the Prime Minister, Mr Fraser, to personally intervene to prevent the damming of the Gordon River in south-west Tasmania.

A West Australian delegate, Mr Jeremy Buxton, told the meeting that the rights of the States under Australian democracy would be threatened if the Federal Government intervened in the damming issue.

Overturning the Tasmanian Government's decision to construct the hydro-electric power station could lead to the end of federalism as we know it, Mr Buxton said.

He stressed that federalism was "the only framework within which Australia could expand and move forward as a nation."

The federal president of the Young Liberals, Mr Mark Birrell, moved the resolution, which also called for the Tasmanian people to be adequately compensated for the shelving of the dam.

(The Young Liberal Movement first adopted a policy in 1981 that there should be no further hydro-electric developments in south-west Tasmania.)

Mr Birrell said after the passage of the resolution that he was confident Mr Fraser would intervene to halt construction of the dam within a month.

"The Prime Minister has a very good track record on environmental issues, and we are confident he will intervene in

accord with public opinion on the issue," Mr Birrell said.

He maintained yesterday's resolution was not intended to embarrass Mr Fraser, who will arrive in Adelaide to address the convention on Friday.

"We believe it (federal intervention) would be beneficial for the Liberal Party electorally by attracting new voters to the party who believe the development should be stopped," Mr Birrell said.

Delegates debating against the resolution argued that intervention would be the first step toward a centralised Government, and as such the issue was political, rather than environmental.

Mr Birrell said, however, that the Tasmanian wilderness was a unique and priceless part of Australia's natural heritage. It belonged to all Australians and was a federal responsibility.

TASMANIAN PREMIER RULES OUT FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS ON DAM

Gray's Intransigence

Melbourne THE AGE in English 29 Jan 83 p 2

[Article by Simon Balderstone]

[Text] CANBERRA. — The Tasmanian Premier, Mr Gray, has refused to negotiate with the Federal Government over the flooding of the Franklin and Gordon rivers in south-west Tasmania.

Mr Gray said there was no prospect of negotiation, and said it was about time that Senator Peter Rae, the Tasmanian Liberal, who suggested the consultation, recognised that "there is no way at all that the dam will not be built".

Mr Gray said that Senator Rae — who also suggested that both sides step back from the brink, and that the Tasmanian Wilderness Society call off the blockade — and the MHR Mr Max Burr were "the only two out of 29 Liberal members of Parliament in Tasmania who are out of step and it is time they recognised that the people of Tasmania have made their decision".

But an increasing number of Tasmanian and mainland Liberal Party officials and members are perturbed at Mr Gray's style of leadership and non-compromising attitude on the dam proposal.

Mr Gray said yesterday that the blockade would "end naturally in a few days and then the whole nonsense will be over".

Senator Rae had called on Mr Gray to take up the Prime Minister's offer of consultations about alternatives to the Federal offer of \$500 million-plus for a

coal-fired thermal power station instead of the dam, which will destroy part of the world heritage area of south-west Tasmania.

Senator Rae said Mr Fraser had assured him the offer was not limited to the thermal station or to the amount announced by the Prime Minister last week.

Senator Rae said yesterday that schemes outside the wilderness area could employ the same or a greater number of people. "I just believe that all those sorts of matters can be taken into account if genuine negotiations take place," he said.

Another Federal Liberal backbencher and former Minister, Mr MacKellar, said yesterday that members of the all-party House of Representatives standing committee on environment and conservation would visit Tasmania next week in connection with the dam issue.

Mr MacKellar, the chairman of the committee and a known opponent of the dam, said he receives mail daily from all over Australia on the issue. He said it would certainly be raised in Federal Parliament when it resumed.

Liberal Party backbenchers have signalled that they will raise the matter in the party room, and the Democrats heritage bill designed to stop the dam is yet to be debated in the Lower House.

Mr MacKellar said yesterday the committee would talk with

the HEC, national parks officers, the Wilderness Society, and local Government officials and would camp overnight on the Franklin River as well as visit Fraser Cave.

The committee had arranged to visit Tasmania last November, but unscheduled sittings of Parliament caused the programme to be postponed.

Opponents' Costs

Melbourne THE AGE in English 29 Jan 83 p 13

[Article by Rosslyn Beeby]

[Text]

Every morning five members of the Tasmanian Wilderness Society's Hobart branch meet to assess the daily costs of maintaining the south-west blockade.

After four weeks, the blockade has cost the society about \$70,000. The society's treasurer, Ms Judy Richter, estimates the average daily cost at around \$2000 — largely spent on food, fuel, camp equipment and telephone bills.

For the society's official opponent, the Tasmanian Government, the extra cost of maintaining a police presence in the south-west to deal with the blockade has been put at \$354,000.

The daily finance meetings, of the Wilderness Society, although relaxed and informal, enable it to keep a sharp eye on costs and to make cutbacks before expenses get out of hand.

Ms Richter estimates the biggest daily expense is communication between Hobart and blockade headquarters in Strahan. After only a month, the Strahan office has run up a telex bill of \$2000, and a similarly large telephone bill is anticipated.

Other daily expenses are more prosaic — toilet rolls, garbage bags, disinfectant (combined daily total \$25), shower buckets (\$100), calico (\$50). At \$1 a metre, a large "no dams" banner can be a substantial and short-term investment, if confiscated during a protest action.

Trips up river from the society's base camp at Butler Island to the dam site are another cost, with fuel bills ranging from \$40 to \$100 a week. Ms Richter says that in one week the society spent more than \$1000 in outboard motor repairs.

She says that due to bad weather and the large number of protesters involved, the society has had to outlay more than originally intended on tarpaulins, big tents and other shelters. "We can have a monster auction of camping equipment when this is all over."

Many of the bigger expenses are non-recurring. The society paid \$20,000 for its premises in Strahan, but this can be resold when the blockade is "resolved", says Ms Richter.

Food costs are high but have largely been recouped through a system where people pay \$2 for each meal eaten at the blockade campsites. Of \$10,000 already outlaid, over \$9000 has been recouped.

Ferrying the media up river to cover blockade action has also been costly. Ms Richter says the society pays a \$100 stand-by fee for fast boats, and an additional \$300 hire fee for each trip. So far, \$11,000 has been spent on

boat hire, but only \$3000 has been recovered.

She claims the blockade is funded by "public generosity" — from donations and sale of goods from society shops. On a brisk trading day, the shop at Strahan makes over \$1000 from the sale of posters, books, T-shirts and other anti-dam paraphernalia.

Young Liberals' Action

Brisbane THE COURIER-MAIL in English 31 Jan 83 p 9

[Text]

TOOWOOMBA.— Young Liberals meeting here yesterday called on the Federal Government to stop the construction of the Franklin River dam in Tasmania.

After a sometimes heated 90-minute debate, the Young Liberals state convention called for federal intervention and, at the same time, supported the Government's \$500 million offer to the Tasmanian Government to construct a thermal power station.

But the compromise resolution worked out also recognised the principles of states' rights. It was passed by about 70 votes to 30.

The resolutions called on the Tasmanian Government to declare the Franklin River area a reserve, but congratulated it and the Federal Government for the successful nomination of south-west Tasmania for the World Heritage list.

The convention voted to dissociate itself from the Queensland Government's expressed support for the Tasmanian Government's stance on the issue.

Delegates were split between those who believed that individual state's rights should be above federal intervention and those who believed that the environmental issue overrode this.

The Young Liberals policy committee submitted that the areas nominated for World Heritage listing represented only 11.6 percent of Tasmania, not 25 percent, as the Tasmanian Premier, Mr Gray, claimed.

Later, the convention voted to call on the Queensland Government to end logging of "virgin" rainforests.

An amendment called on the Government to hold an inquiry into alternative timber supplies.

CSO: 5000/7552

WA AHEAD IN MAPPING STATE CONSERVATION STRATEGIES

Perth THE WEST AUSTRALIAN in English 15 Jan 83 p 18

[Text]

A STATE conservation strategy for WA—aimed at integrating future development with conservation—is expected to be released next month.

The Minister for the Environment and Conservation, Mr Laurance, said yesterday he hoped to release the document in conjunction with a major national conservation conference starting in Canberra on February 26.

WA is the first State to go ahead with the development of its own conservation strategy after the release of the world conservation strategy two years ago.

That document was prepared by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, the United Nations environment programme and the World Wildlife Fund.

It was released in 34 countries with the recommendation that each should draw up its own plan to meet the conflicting demands of development

and the natural environment.

Next month's meeting in Canberra is a major step towards the completion of a national conservation strategy for Australia.

The WA strategy is intended to complement the national plan and will cover such problem areas as:

- Environmental problems in agricultural and pastoral areas.
- Land allocation and management of parks and reserves.
- Quality and quantity of water supplies.
- Degradation of coastal zones and estuaries.
- Flora and fauna protection and other conservation issues.

Mr Laurance said that the WA strategy had involved close consultation between Government, industry and environmental groups and would serve as a prescription for future land use and management in WA.

The president of the Peel Preston Preservation Group, Mr Len Howard, said yesterday that the national conference would be a milestone in Australian awareness of the need to protect the world's living resources.

Topics to be discussed would include the urgent need to conserve Australia's soil, water, forests and coastal ecosystems.

"One subject that will interest Mandurah residents is the protection of wetlands and the need for more areas in Australia to be designated as wetlands of international importance," Mr Howard said.

He said that the group would make representations to the conference on the importance of the Peel Inlet and Harvey estuary.

The group has already nominated the estuary for World Heritage listing.

AUSTRALIA

SYDNEY FOUND TO HAVE ACID RAIN; SMOG SITUATION IMPROVES

Sydney THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD in English 13, 14 Jan 83

[Article by Tom Ballantyne]

[13 Jan 83 p 6]

[Excerpts] During summer, Sydney is producing significant levels of acid rain, a type of pollution which has caused devastating environmental damage in North America and Europe.

Research by CSIRO scientists over the past two years has detected rain which is as acidic as orange juice.

The acid rain is a pollutant which has no taste or smell and looks and feels like ordinary rain or snow.

It originates in industrial plants, oil refineries, power stations and cars.

Sulphur and nitrogen emissions pour into the atmosphere, are slowly transformed into rain, drift in cloud form for several days and then drop to earth, sometimes with disastrous results.

There has been little interest in acid rain in Australia because it was thought that neither the population nor industry were big enough to cause problems.

Measurements of rain acidity by Dr Greg Ayers and Mr Rob Gillett of CSIRO have shown that Sydney shares with its northern hemisphere counterparts the ability, in summer at least, to produce significant levels of rainwater acidity.

In pure water there are equal concentrations of acids and alkalines and it is said to have a pH factor of 7. The lower the number the more acidic the water is.

In the worst-affected regions of the northeastern United States, annual mean pH values of 4 have been observed, compared with about 4.6 in Sydney.

The lowest pH so far detected in the Sydney studies was 3.6 in a sample taken at Epping.

Dr Ayers believes that, judging by experience elsewhere in the world, the levels detected in Sydney are not likely to lead to obvious environmental damage.

Possibly such acid levels in summer could increase the corrosion of steel, masonry and other exposed surfaces.

Dr Ayers, of the CSIRO Division of Cloud Physics at Epping, is working at the Division of Atmospheric Physics in Melbourne, allowing the study to be extended to that city.

The Sydney sampling of rain took place monthly during the summer of 1980-81, when 294 rain samples were collected from 12 sites across the city.

Most of the rainwater collected had a pH below 5.2 and could therefore be labelled as acid rain.

The samples with the lowest acidity came from Loftus, a site that lies upwind of the city during the southeasterly winds that bring most of Sydney's summer rain.

Rainwater unaffected by city emissions has a pH value of around 5.2.

The researchers analysed their samples for ammonia, sulphate and nitrate, confirming that nitric and sulphuric acids are mainly to blame for the acidity.

Without these additional acids, Sydney's summer rain would have a pH of about 5.2. Adding weight to that estimate, four samples of rainwater collected 270 kilometres south of Sydney during onshore winds showed a mean pH of exactly 5.2.

The researchers also found that rainwater from clouds that passed over Sydney remained acidic for some time.

Sites at Warrimoo and Springwood in the Blue Mountains, 60 to 70 km inland, showed essentially the same acid levels as all other samples taken, except for those gathered at Loftus.

[14 Jan 83 p 6]

[Excerpts] More than three million people, around 1.6 million motor vehicles, four oil refineries, a number of petrochemical plants and heavy industry as well as an abundance of warm, sunny weather: this is Sydney, and the mixture is an ideal recipe for smog.

According to scientists, the nation's major population centre is Australia's most smog-bound city, yet in recent years the incidence of smog has dropped quite dramatically.

And, despite lengthy study, they don't really know why.

The National Health and Medical Research Council recommends a maximum level of ozone exceeded that level.

In recent years there have been on average only nine or 10 such days.

Details of the intensive study of smog in Sydney, and the mystery of where it has gone, are outlined in the latest edition of Ecos, the CSIRO's magazine on science and the environment.

Scientists point out that Sydney shares with two other Pacific cities, Los Angeles and Tokyo, the unhappy distinction of having recorded the highest ozone levels in the world.

Identifying the hydrocarbons in Sydney's air and tracking down their source has been the project of the atmospheric science section of the CSIRO division of fossil fuels, led by Dr Maurice Mulcahy.

It used a complex technique to identify more than 200 hydrocarbon species in the City's atmosphere.

The detective work led to a breakdown showing that the principal sources of atmospheric hydrocarbons were vehicle exhaust (36 percent), evaporation of petrol (32 percent) and evaporation of solvents (23 percent).

Leaks from Sydney's gas mains constituted another hydrocarbon source, one consisting mainly of methane, ethane and propane.

Another minor source was identified as process emissions from petro-chemical plants and refineries (5 percent).

By selecting data according to the direction of wind at the time, scientists were able to separate the individual hydrocarbon contributions from industrial sites and heavily trafficked areas.

One finding was that, relative to other sources, the central business district contributed 8-10 percent more non-methane hydrocarbons from exhausts than the rest of the City.

The CSIRO scientists identified three areas as major contributors of smog ingredients.

These were the central City area, the Silverwater industrial area and a coastal source taking in Kurnell and the area around both headlands at the entrance to Botany Bay.

The results of the research showed that vehicle exhausts, petrol and petrol vapour together are responsible for three-quarters of the air's smog production rate.

The problem now confronting them is why, since the middle of the 1970's, smog occurrence has dropped dramatically.

Some scientists believe the weather could be blamed, or thanked, for the drop in smog.

The drainage of cool overnight air from the Blue Mountains towards the coast is an important event in ozone production.

But high hydrocarbon concentrations, including the highest recorded during 1979 and 1980, have occurred on days of weak air flow.

CSO: 5000/7547

POWER PLANT SAID TO THREATEN LAKE WITH ECOLOGICAL RUIN

Sydney THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD in English 10 Jan 83 p 8

[Article by Graham Williams]

[Text]

Hot water discharged from power stations is contributing to an "ecological disaster" at Lake Macquarie, according to a Newcastle biologist.

Now the State Pollution Control Commission is to investigate the latest report of hot water threatening marine life.

A copy of a document obtained by the Herald shows that water up to 8.2 degrees hotter than the licensed maximum was poured into the lake one day last month from a 660-megawatt generator.

A photostat of an operating log book at Vales Point power station dated December 6 says that at 7 am the temperature of the water used to cool the No. 6 unit was 43.2 degrees Celsius at its outlet into the lake, while that of the No. 5 unit was 41 degrees.

After backwash valves on both units were closed, the temperature of the water being discharged dropped by 3 degrees.

The Newcastle regional coordinator of the State Pollution Control Commission, Mr. Alan Campbell, said that he would investigate the incident.

The station is licensed to discharge water no hotter than 35 degrees into the lake, and we are very concerned about the lake becoming overheated, he said.

But Mr. Campbell said investigations had shown that Elcom exceeded the 35 degree limit in the discharge of its cooling water in only 3.6 per cent of the operating hours of its lake power stations in the year to January, 1982.

Mr. Kevin McDonald, a senior lecturer in biology at Newcastle College of Advanced Education, said Lake Macquarie was being subjected to thermal pollution that could destroy a vast amount of sea life if continued.

"Already the lake is facing an ecological disaster because of overheating, partly caused by power stations discharging so much warm water into a very shallow lake."

The 660-megawatt units discharge millions of litres per hour and a temperature of 43.2 degrees

is hot enough to cook an oyster.

The high temperatures of cooling water being discharged oxygen starvation in the lake.

"It is a very shallow lake, but once it heats up — as happened to the Great Lakes in North America when they put power stations around them — it kills off the many forms of plant life that are crucial in the food chain of fish and other sea life."

A spokesman for the Electricity Commission said last night that he could neither confirm nor deny the authenticity of the report.

CSO: 5000/7046

WA MINISTER DENIES EPA "VICTIM OF INDUSTRY PRESSURE

Perth THE WEST AUSTRALIAN in English 7 Jan 83 p 19

[Text]

THE Minister for Conservation and the Environment, Mr Laurance, has described as nonsense a suggestion that the Superannuation Board's involvement with a development company would influence Environmental Protection Authority findings on canal projects.

Mr Laurance was commenting on criticism by the Peel-Preston Preservation Group of the decision by the State Superannuation Board to buy a 50 per cent interest in Parrys Esplanade Ltd's Halls Head development.

The development includes one of two major canal projects planned for the Mandurah area. Both were ruled by the EPA to be environmentally acceptable.

The PPPA president, Mr Len Howard, had said that the move by the Superannuation Board was seen as placing pressure on the EPA to approve the canal projects.

The group announced that it intended to seek World Heritage listing for Peel Inlet in a bid to stop the two canal projects going ahead.

Mr Laurance said, however, that the EPA made wholly objective environmental assessments on the basis of scientific and engineering facts, not finances.

In this instance, it had reported on the two projects before the board's announcement was made.

'No contact'

The director of the Superannuation Board, Mr R. W. Yorg, said yesterday that the board had had no contact with the EPA about the Halls Head project.

"Further, a clean estuary is clearly in the joint venture's interest as it would obviously enhance the development," Mr Yorg said.

He denied that taxpayers' money would be invested in the project, as suggested by Mr Howard.

FILM OF TASMANIAN RAINFOREST GETS INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION

Melbourne THE AGE in English 5 Jan 83 p 2

[Article by Robert Honeybun: "BBC To Use Forest Film"]

[Text]

An Australian film about western Tasmania's temperate rainforests will be used by the BBC for the premiere of a new natural science programme, 'Nature', on 13 January.

An eight-minute section of the film, 'Fate of the Forests', will appear with two other films in the first episode of the new series, which deals with conservation issues.

The 30-minute film was made by Philip Lohrey of Island Films, working out of Sydney and Hobart. Mr Lohrey yesterday attributed much of the BBC's interest in the film to the English botanist Dr David Bellamy.

Mr Lohrey said that thanks to Dr Bellamy's enthusiasm for the film both Yorkshire Television and BBC-2 were interested in buying the complete film. Dr Bellamy saw the film in Sydney in November and was ecstatic.

"The importance of this film is that it gives very good reasons why we should preserve our great southern rainforests and, need I say it, the Franklin River," Dr Bellamy said at the time.

"With most films we say

'Oh, isn't that pretty'. This film gives new facts we cannot ignore," he said.

The BBC contacted Island Films urgently over the Christmas-holiday period to arrange the segment for 'Nature'. Video tapes of the film were sent to Japan and the USA after an agent approached Mr Lohrey for the overseas marketing rights, a rare occurrence.

Island Films is finding it more difficult to sell the film in Australia. It was originally called 'Last Stands, Tasmania' and ran for a "commercial hour" (an

hour less time for advertisements).

The original film met with some interest from the ABC and Network 10 but no sales were made. Following industry advice to reduce the number of "talking heads" in the film with a view to international sales, the new film emerged.

Ironically, Mr Lohrey said the shorter length of the new film was probably the greatest hindrance to local sales.

The new film concentrates on the significance of Tasmania's forests to the few remaining areas of temperate rain forest in the

world. Similar areas still exist in South America, New Zealand and on the Australian mainland, but the other Australian areas are tiny and not as complex as those in Tasmania, Mr Lohrey says.

These forests are the remnants of the temperate rain forests of the original "super-continent", Gondwanaland, which split into today's land masses, according to the theories of continental drift. None of the forest survives in the northern hemisphere.

'Fate of the Forests' includes footage of the excavation by botanists of Huon pine logs growing 5000 years ago and of a 2000-year-old Huon pine which is still growing.

If overseas sales of the complete 'Fate of the Forests' go ahead there could be more changes.

The Tasmanian Wilderness Society had planned to show the film in mainland capital cities and major provincial centres as part of its campaign against dams in south-west Tasmania. That plan now appears to be under review as a new film will be made of the blockade of the Gordon-below-Franklin dam site.

WA GOVERNMENT TO ALLOW GREATER ACCESS TO DIEBACK-PRONE FORESTS

Policy Relaxation

Perth THE WEST AUSTRALIAN in English 13 Jan 83 p 20

[Text] **THE WA Government has adopted a revised policy allowing increased access to some areas of dieback-affected forest, provided that operations comply with a seven-point test.**

The Government expects that the guidelines for what it calls safe re-entry to previously quarantined areas will increase job opportunities.

The test is based on the risk of introducing dieback disease, its likely impact and the effect on land-use.

A decision to accept, reject or modify a proposed activity will be made after test factors have been evaluated.

After a decision to proceed with an operation, existing guidelines will be used or new ones prepared.

Document

A Forests Department policy document, released yesterday, said that access to natural resources in proclaimed disease-risk areas had been severely constrained since 1976.

[Nearly 720,000 hectares—36.5 per cent of total State forest area—has been proclaimed disease risk. The area stretches from Mun-

daring to Walpole. A big part of the forest is under quarantine].

The document said that there was mounting pressure for access to the areas for poles, sawlogs and mineral exploration.

Experimental logging trials had been done in these areas at Dwellin-gup in 1980 and at Nannup in 1982.

Sawlog resources within proclaimed areas were required in the southern region in 1984 and in the central and northern regions in 1985.

The document said that at least 18 months was needed to plan roads. The expected shortfall of poles this year alone was about 17,000.

It was apparent that a review of the existing policy on access to resources in proclaimed disease-risk areas was warranted.

Areas of forest where the risk of introducing disease was high and the consequences serious should be put in long term isolation.

In other risk areas, after a period of isolation to enable disease symptoms to become evidence and for mapping, limited access to available resources might be permitted.

The Premier, Mr O'Connor, said yesterday that the revised policy was the result of nine years' work on research, operational trials and forest management planning.

Research had led to a better understanding of dieback disease, and 19 groups of experts had begun a review early last year.

The Government had chosen the quarantine method in 1974 in an effort to combat dieback.

Since then a highly accurate mapping method had been developed. Procedures had

been designed for permitting logging while minimising dieback development and research had continued.

The success in restricting the spread of the disease resulted from public co-operation, especially from forest users.

Mr O'Connor said the review had confirmed that existing legislation was adequate for control subject to subdivision of the quarantine area into categories permitting various degrees of access according to risk.

These categories ranged from exclusion to areas where operations were permitted under hygiene controls.

The Forests Department would continue to give high priority to dieback control.

Conservationist Criticism

Perth THE WEST AUSTRALIAN in English 14 Jan 83 p 24

[Text

THE decision by the WA Government to allow increased access to some areas of dieback-affected forest was a case of political expediency, it was asserted yesterday.

Dr Beth Schultz, of the South-West Forests Defence Foundation, said that the decision was unlikely to be in the long-term interest of the forests or the people of WA.

[The Premier, Mr

O'Connor, said on Wednesday that the revised policy was the result of nine years' work on research, operational trials and forest management planning.]

Dr Schultz said there had been behind-the-scenes activity for some time regarding logging in the quarantine area and mining exploration. It had speeded up recently, obviously for political reasons.

CSO: 5000/7546

UNDERGROUND CHEMICAL WASTE DISPOSAL SYSTEM DEVELOPED

Perth THE WEST AUSTRALIAN in English 28 Jan 83 p 17

[Text] **CHEMICAL Industries (Kwinana) Pty Ltd has developed a new system to pump its toxic waste deep underground.**

It will drill a bore 1000 metres deep into the bottom of a salt-water aquifer to dispose of 24D and 245T waste.

The 200mm-wide bore will be lined with stainless-steel piping and is expected to be in operation by August.

The State Government told the company last year to come up with a solution to the problem of disposing of 24D and 245T waste.

High readings of the chemicals were found in underground water and in the urine of workers at the plant.

The manager of Chemical Industries, Mr John Telford, would not comment on the cost of the operation yesterday.

The Minister for Works and Water Resources, Mr Mensaros, said that the injected fluid had a high density and would settle on the base of the aquifer.

It would move slowly westwards, spreading as a radial fan which would disperse as it mixed with the saline ground water.

Geologists predicted that it would take thousands of years before the first diluted effluent could reach the ocean, he said.

"Potential ground-water users are also protected: They would reject water from this aquifer because of its high salinity," Mr Mensaros said.

He said that the Government would continue to monitor ground water contaminated earlier.

FISHERMEN SEEK DAMAGES FROM OFFSHORE OIL POLLUTION

Melbourne THE AGE in English 2 Feb 83 p 3

[Text]

The owners of 20 fishing boats at Lakes Entrance yesterday took offshore oil producers Esso-BHP to the Supreme Court, claiming \$5 million damages for interference with their livelihood.

Their barrister, Mr E. W. Gillard, QC, told Mr Justice Tadgeil the plaintiffs alleged that since oil exploration and production began off the eastern Victorian coast in the 1960s, fishing grounds had been polluted, nets had been cut and catches had been lost, and boats had been caught almost 1000 times on debris discarded in the oil works.

The action has been taken by 47 people, one private company and the estate of one man who has died since the writ was issued in 1976. They owned 20 boats during the period covered in this action, from 1970 to 1976. (Two more writs bringing the claims to the present were issued yesterday and in November last year.)

They claim that the defendants' actions have meant that the size of the catch has been limited, and that certain prime fishing grounds must now be avoided because of the hazards to boats.

Allege

They allege that Esso BHP have breached the duties imposed by Federal and State acts; that they have caused a public nuisance, and that they have been negligent.

The defendants are Esso Exploration and Production Australia Inc., Hematite Petroleum Pty. Ltd., a BHP company, and the contractor, J. Ray McDermott (Australia) Pty. Ltd.

Mr Gillard said that for many years the water between Wilson's Promontory and Point Hicks had been fruitful fishing grounds, particularly for flathead, morwong and whiting.

"The plaintiffs as commercial fishermen seek damages from the defendants for the pollution to, interference with and in some areas total destruction of the fishing grounds caused by the actions of the defendants and their contractors," Mr Gillard said.

Mr Gillard submitted that Esso-BHP were liable for the actions of their contractors.

"It is our contention that during the course of the works much material went overboard to the seabed," he said. It lay there, for any unsuspecting fisherman to come along with his nets and pick up, rip the nets, and the fisherman would suffer damage not only to his property, but also of the catch in the nets.

"We contend the junk and debris fell to the seabed because of the gross negligence of Esso-BHP, their servants, agents and contractors, or because of the deliberate actions of personnel working for them."

He said that on many occasions junk was either thrown overboard during construction work, or lost during bad weather because of a failure to secure it.

"We say when the oil people came into this area, the business of fishing was obvious to them, and yet despite the presence of the fishermen, despite the clear provisions of the 1958 Geneva Convention on the Continental Shelf, and the clear provisions of the Commonwealth and State Petroleum and Submerged Lands Act, and despite the clear provisions of their licences, Esso-BHP and their contractors polluted in a large way, over a large area, fishing grounds off Lakes Entrance."

Junk

He said junk that had been recovered included a ladder, lengths of pipe and heavy cable, a buoy and concrete block, a radar reflector, an anchor, gas bottles, large drums, a diesel engine and a steel door.

He said that during the period covered by the action boats had become fast on production junk 550 times, and there had been 379 instances since.

"The attitude by the joint venturers is that unless the fishermen with their limited resources produce to the satisfaction of the two companies the piece of debris or junk and identify it as coming from Esso-BHP, they are not prepared to meet the claims made by the fishermen. Hence we have this litigation."

The defendants had conducted three clean-up exercises in the area, covering about an eighth of the 5180 square kilometre area, but despite requests for more cleaning work, Esso-BHP took the view that the cost was too high and it was far better to put the burden on fishermen to establish a claim each time they got fast, Mr Gillard said.

The case will continue today.

TOWNSPEOPLE AT ODDS WITH GOVERNMENT OVER ASBESTOS HAZARD

Perth THE WEST AUSTRALIAN in English 27 Jan 83 News of the North p 1

[Article by Peter Morony and Peter Trott]

[Excerpts] A showdown between the Minister for the North-West and Tourism, Mr MacKinnon, and the people of Wittenoom over the asbestos hazard in the town resulted in a stalemate after informal discussions on Saturday.

Mr MacKinnon reaffirmed the Government's decision to phase out the town and to treat the residents with investments there as individual cases.

However, there were not enough people for a quorum at the meeting and little progress was made.

Before the meeting, the chairman of the town's health and works committee, Mr Frank Soter, said that the Government had gagged public servants and suppressed information on the asbestos hazard.

He claimed that information questioning the Government's decision had been withheld and Health Department experts had been barred from releasing information which did not support the political decision.

"For 18 months we have been asking the Government for more monitors to measure the airborne asbestos in town," Mr Soter said.

Mr MacKinnon said that he did not believe that the Government had promised further monitoring devices but if it had then he would honour the Government's commitment.

"There is no doubt in my mind that there is a health problem and nothing can be done to eliminate it. In my view to undertake any more monitoring would have to be seriously questioned," Mr MacKinnon said.

He said a detailed feasibility study was being undertaken by White Industries into a proposed tourist complex away from the existing town.

"We have always indicated that we believe the town will be phase out," Mr MacKinnon said.

"The real problem is that there is no alternative. I understand that problem and we are trying to help them."

"I believe this will happen when the tourist complex gets underway."

Last year the State conference of the ALP adopted a motion put by Mr Soter that, as a government, Labor would see that where a government or a private enterprise was found to have created a hazard to health or possible existence of a community, the government or company would accept liability for it.

As a result of the operation of the asbestos mine in Wittenoom Gorge by Australian Blue Asbestos, owned by CSR, which closed in 1966, there is an estimated six million tonnes of asbestos tailings. Some of the tailings wash down Joffre Creek into the Fortescue River valley every time there is heavy rain.

CSO: 5000/7552

GROWING SALINITY OF LAND, RIVERS DESCRIBED AS 'CALAMITY'

Canberra THE AUSTRALIAN in English 27 Jan 83 p 9

[Article by Tim Hewat]

[Excerpts] It's an odd contradiction but the busiest tradespeople in country towns throughout drought-wrecked eastern Australia this summer have been the tank makers.

They have been flat out trying to meet the demand for 1000 litre and 1500 litre corrugated iron tanks.

As the drought worsened, town water supplies became steadily more undrinkable; householders decided to catch what little rain there was off their roofs and use it for drinking water.

The culprit is salt. The problem of salination in Australia's creeks and rivers has been growing for years--ask the citizens of Adelaide who must drink water from the Murray River at the end of the long journeys from Queensland (via the Darling River) from NSW (via the Murrumbidgee and the Lachlan) and from Victoria (via the Goulburn, Campaspe and Loddon).

By the time all those waters decant into the Murray and flow into South Australia they are almost as salty as sea water.

The drought has made the problem more apparent because the flow in most of the rivers has dwindled to a trickle, making the salt content much more concentrated. When the autumn break comes the salt will be diluted again, but the problem will not go away.

It has the makings of Australia's greatest single calamity, but because it is apparently far removed from the biggest cities--and because the solutions are monumentally expensive--politicians prefer to take no notice of it and hope it will quietly go away. Instead, it will get worse.

I am indebted to Des Morris, the manager of THE GUARDIAN newspaper at Swan Hill, beside the Murray, for a simple historic explanation of the way the white settlers and their descendants have ruined a delicate climatic balance and brought forth a very real threat to the nation's food supply.

Greatest Calamity

"The white man went to work. He needed permanent water for his crops, stock, transport and domestic needs. So he checked the natural fluctuations by building giant dams and storages along the rivers. And, to have clear land, he felled the trees.

"Damming the rivers and cutting down the trees raised the level of the water in the ground, lifted the water table.

"All went well until vast tracts of land became sterile because quantities of salt were brought to the surface by the rising groundwater level.

"In just the very short span of 170 years we have changed the face of the Murray-Darling basin: have ruined many thousands of hectares of fertile soil, turning them into salted-out wasteland. In some areas salinity is increasing at the rate of 15 per cent a year--and it is accelerated by drought."

There have been several government inquiries and research projects to try to find enduring answers. It is now seriously suggested, for example, that a mighty pipeline from the Mildura area of Victoria should carry the salt water down to the sea in South Australia.

It is further, and very sensibly suggested that all farmers must be obliged to plant perhaps a tenth of their land with trees to force down the water table and that shire councils should plant all roadsides with trees for the same purpose.

All corrections will be vastly expensive, therefore governments put them off. But an hour in an aeroplane over the Murray or any of the other key rivers demonstrates that the solutions cannot be delayed. The gaunt skeletal gum trees and sweeps of dead, salt-encrusted grasses signal that action must be taken at once.

CSO: 5000/7552

BRIEFS

CONTAMINATION OF EGGS--The WA Department of Agriculture has warned farmers about selling contaminated eggs. Tests conducted by the Federal Department of Primary Industry on eggs from some farming areas in WA have revealed traces of DDT, aldrin, dieldrin and heptachlor. The director of the Agriculture Department, Mr N. Fitzpatrick, said yesterday that the level of insecticides revealed by the tests were well within accepted safety standards. However, the department felt obliged to warn farmers of the dangers of free-range fowls becoming contaminated by pesticide. [Text] [Perth THE WEST AUSTRALIAN in English 26 Jan 83 p 34]

DROUGHT IN IRRIGATED AREAS--More than half of Victoria's 211 municipalities had been declared drought areas, the Premier, Mr Cain, said yesterday. Mr Cain said 126 municipalities were wholly or partly declared drought areas with the addition yesterday of all irrigated areas in the Goulburn-Murray and Campaspe districts and between Swan Hill and Mildura. All major irrigation areas of the State were now declared drought areas, he said. Yesterday's declarations covered irrigation areas in the shires of Cobram, Cohuna, Deakin, East Loddon, Euroa, Gordon, Korong, Mildura, Nathalia, Numurkah, Rochester, Rodney, Shepparton, Swan Hill, Tungamah, Waranga and Yarrawonga. The non-irrigated areas of these municipalities were declared drought areas some time ago, with the exception of Cohuna which is almost all irrigated. Mr Cain also announced that drought declarations had been extended in two non-irrigation areas--the South Riding of Alexandra Shire and the Howqua Riding of Mansfield Shire. [By Barbara Fih] [Text] [Melbourne THE AGE in English 31 Jan 83 p 4]

ROTTNEST REFORESTATION--An accelerated reforestation programme for Rottnest Island has been announced by the Minister for Lands, Mr Laurance. He said yesterday that \$66,000 from job-bank money would be injected into the programme and the State Government had boosted the amount available for reforestation to \$80,000. In each of the past five years \$20,000 had been allocated for reforestation. Mr Laurance said that reforestation was being undertaken by the Rottnest Island Board with the Forests Department. [Text] [Perth THE WEST AUSTRALIAN in English 1 Feb 83 p 15]

GOVERNMENT ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISOR--Canberra--The Federal Government has appointed a leading opponent of the Gordon-below-Franklin dam to a key advisory post. Professor Ralph Slatyer, who is chairman of the World Heritage Committee which only last month listed south-west Tasmania as one of the world's last natural wilderness areas, was named the new chairman of the Australian Science and Technology Council. The council is the Government's most important source of advice on scientific matters. The Acting Prime Minister, Mr Anthony, in a statement praising Professor Slatyer, specified four present and seven past postings in which he had rendered public service, but did not mention his chairmanship of the World Heritage Committee. [Text] [Melbourne THE AGE in English 6 Jan 83 p 3]

MERCURY IN FISH--Melbourne--The State Government will crack down on the sale of fish with a high mercury content. The Minister for Health, Mr Roper, said new regulations were needed to protect the public. "The public is at risk and these new regulations will protect Victorian fishermen from illegal imports and consumers from this potential health hazard," Mr Roper said. [Text] [Perth THE WEST AUSTRALIAN in English 13 Jan 83 p 29]

CSO: 5000/7547

SHIPOWNERS TOLD TO START CAMPAIGN AGAINST POLLUTION

Manila BULLETIN TODAY in English 15 Mar p 32

[Article by F. T. Flores]

[Text]

Transportation Minister Jose P. Dans, Jr. urges foreign and domestic shipowners to implement the United Nations' drive against pollution in the coastal areas, harbors, and rivers.

He was prompted to make the appeal because of the recent findings by the United Nations that edible marine species in said areas have been dwindling as a result of the indiscriminate dumping of oil wastes, garbage, and some poisonous chemicals.

This threat could be checked once the

national pollution commission adopt measures that would prohibit vessels and other seacrafts from dumping their oil wastes into the coastal areas.

For example, in the United States, Europe, Japan, and Latin Americas, they have launched a program that requires crewmembers of the vessels to refrain from polluting harbors and the seawater near the coastline.

As a result, these countries have abundant supply of fish, crustaceans, edible corals and flowers, and other marine species.

Meanwhile, the Asean countries — Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, and Indonesia — will adopt measures that would minimize ferryboat accidents in the region.

Among the proposed measures are: 1) Facilities of the ferryboats should be improved; 2) Dilapidating ferryboats should be phased out by the respective governments to assure the safety of the passengers; 3) Ferryboat crewmembers should undergo rigid training.

CSC: 5000/4322

INTENSE AIR POLLUTION PROBLEMS OF CAIRO REVIEWED

Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 24 Feb 83 p 4

/Article: "A Warning to the Inhabitants of Cairo: If You Do Not Smoke You Still Take in 18 Cigarettes a day!"/

/Text/ You don't smoke. That's great.

However, you are an inhabitant of Cairo; do you know that in that case it is as if you were taking in 18 cigarettes a day?

This grave fact has been declared by environmental experts; another, graver fact is that about 200 tons of cement are polluting this capital every day. The air in the capital, a source of life, has become lethal. However, the important thing is the solution.

You are a citizen of Cairo and you do not smoke; do you know that you are taking in the equivalent of 18 cigarettes a day, a volume that is not restricted to a single type but varies, from the fixed cigarettes that arise from the smokestacks of factories to the moving cigarettes that the exhaust pipes of cars carry around?

You start your day by going out to work in the morning and face a range of probabilities of debris from natural elements. However, what is certain is that you will be exposed to automobile exhaust and the smoke from bakery stacks, and, if you are a resident of Garden City or Heliopolis, you will be lucky if you do not also suffer from the smells and other things exuded by garbage and other debris in the streets and alleys.

The cycle continues and forces people to smoke, their noses notwithstanding, in the street, at work, and even at sleep!

In the Language of Figures

Let us let the figures describe the true condition that the state of the air in Cairo has reached!

There are 80,000 tons of fuel that emerge in the form of exhaust emitted into the atmosphere by about 600,000 cars roaming about in our streets night and

day. If we take the number of wrecked and dilapidated cars into account, the volume of the pollution could come to several times that figure.

There are 20,000 sites, in the form of workshops and small industries concentrated in Cairo, from which exhaust and debris are emitted, covering the atmosphere with an umbrella of pollution. To that one might add about 20 factories whose smokestacks emit danger into the air all year round.

Forty percent of the hours in the year, the industrial area of Shubra al-Khaymah is dominated by poor visibility, which is reflected in the high rate of electricity consumption by day and the high level of traffic accidents.

Forty-five limestone kilns behind the Cairo Stadium use the worst grades of distillate fuel.

These figures are terrifying, when we realize that fully-grown human beings need 14.5 kilograms of clean air a day and the volume increases to several times that, according to the physical effort the person exerts; that is, persons need a volume of clean air that exceeds their need for food and water.

The Air in Hilwan Is Constantly Deteriorating

If we concentrate on Hilwan as an industrial area, we will find that the annual rate of deposition of dust particles comes to 377 tons per square mile per month, thereby exceeding the normal rates in industrial areas, which must not exceed 30 tons per square mile per month. This has caused the air in the region constantly to deteriorate, in the face of the industrial expansion that has started to be carried out in the absence of the protective measures advanced industrial countries take into account in a thousand different ways, since their legislation gives any individual or organization the right directly to sue the body that is causing the pollution, so that the problem will not cast its shadow over their citizens' health and the progress of their domestic economies.

200 Tons of Cement in the Atmosphere

Not even the economic dimension can be isolated from the effects of pollution. Industrial companies have been and still are pouring their waste directly into the air and neglecting allocations to eliminate the damage resulting from this waste, with the result that this situation has started to affect them economically. We find 200 tons of cement rushing up into the air every day from the smokestacks of the Hilwan Portland Company! This is equal to 5.5 percent of the productive capacity of the furnaces, and it is above and beyond the waste from the operations of preparing the raw materials and packaging the cement that is produced.

Although Article 139 of the executive bill of the Traffic Law stipulates that automobile engines must be in good condition and that they must not emit dense exhaust which is harmful to citizens' health or irritating to people making use of public roads, Public Transport Authority vehicles do not want

to fall behind in their contributions to the pollution of air. Indeed, they insist on having the lion's share in this field.

For Export Only!

That is a slogan that some foreign companies producing insecticides and agricultural chemicals raise. It touches on the problems of pollution in the developing countries uniformly to the quick: however, the amazing thing is that some of these companies' products are subject to export only and not to local consumption, which means that they are fully aware of the danger of their use but nonetheless continue to export them.

The reason for this, as Dr Anwar al-Dib of the National Research Center points out, is the absence of legislation in the importing countries which would compel the exporting firms to provide special data on insecticides and the legislation governing them throughout the world. Although the World Health Organization identifies different types of chemicals which are toxic over the long term and provides lists on them to member countries, the freedom to import is left up to the countries!

Vocational Medicine Gives Warning

The results of pollution whose effects are clearly noticeable appear plainly among workers in the industrial areas and in specific industries where workers face vocational hazards such as dust produced by the ginning of cotton and by cement factories, in addition to toxic fumes in battery factories. Nonetheless, as Dr 'Ali Mas'ud, the chairman of the Department of Social and Environmental Medicine and Industrial Medicine at 'Ayn Shams University, asserts, we find that most of the laws that specify the precautionary measures needed to protect workers on the job are based on standards brought in from abroad and are at variance with the actual state and nature of the work environment.

Natural Gas Is a Plus

Containing the problem of pollution is not an impossibility, especially if there is cooperation among scientific research bodies and executive authorities. Substituting natural gas for distillates and gasoline, as Dr Sa'd 'Awad, professor of air pollution, sees it, could exempt us from the problems of pollution because it does not contain sulphur or sulphur compounds, on the one hand, and because its economic costs are now on the other--not to mention the fact that it reduces corrosion within electric power plants.

Treatment at the Source

Meanwhile, Dr Fatimah al-Jawhari, a professor of water pollution at the National Research Center, considers that to guarantee the safety of drinking water there must be coordination among agencies of industry, agriculture and irrigation and each of these agencies must inform the bodies that produce water in all newly established projects. In addition, there is a need to link environmental legislation to development planning for the sake of

predicting and learning about consequences to the environment before starting construction, so that problems may thus be eliminated at the source before they become magnified.

This recommendation is in keeping with the recommendation of the specialized national councils' report regarding the environment in Egypt, which added that it was important that a town be established outside Cairo but close to it where workshops and small industries would be concentrated.

An Environmental Observation Network

A network should be established for observing the environment in the pattern of the special system for meteorology, which would consist of field stations to cover most areas of the republic. However, the success of the system, as Dr 'Abd-al-Fattah al-Qassas, professor of environment at Cairo University, asserts, will be contingent on the provision of plans and curricula for environmental studies in the schools and universities and the preparation of programs to train specialists in areas of environmental sciences.

In addition, attention to the planting of trees, and to green spaces in general, will contribute greatly to the reduction of the severity of the problem, since they absorb carbon dioxide, which raises the temperature of the atmosphere, and they also pick up some other foreign materials in the air.

The bodies that are responsible for examining pollution problems are numerous and diverse; all that is necessary is cooperation among them. There is a committee to support research on the environment in the Scientific Research Academy and a committee to study the environment in the Ministry of Education.

Is it logical for this situation to continue, so that the citizen of capital continues to smoke and smoke, without letup?

Will the 16 cigarettes that the citizen of the capital takes in continue to be a fixed amount?

Or will it increase above this rate?

110 7
CSO: 5.704608

INSTITUTE TO SAFEGUARD HIMALAYAN ENVIRONMENT PLANNED

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 10 Feb 83 p 13

[Text] Lucknow, February 9. An institute of Himalayan environment will be set up to safeguard the ecology of the mountains and ensure planned utilisation of available resources.

This was announced by Mr Digvijay Singh, Union deputy minister for environment, at a press conference here today.

He said a blueprint for an ecological regeneration programme in the Himalayas had already been prepared by his ministry.

He stated that his ministry was particularly concerned about hills in Uttar Pradesh which were endangered by growing deforestation and pollution.

Mr Digvijay Singh told newsmen that special studies were being made about the pollution threat to the waters of the Ganga, the Yamuna, the Rihand and the Naini Tal lake. After the completion of the studies, effective measures would be initiated to check water pollution.

Earlier, he held discussions with senior officials of various departments of the state government on taking more stringent measures for checking pollution and for environmental protection.

On the growing pollution threat in industrial cities, Mr Digvijay Singh said three proposals had been made to the Centre to persuade industrialists to enforce anti-pollution measures. These envisaged an offer of soft loans, tax concessions and cash benefits to all factories which adhered to the enactments concerning environmental protection.

About noise pollution in housing colonies near airports, he said a Central committee had been set up to draft suitable legislation.

In U.P., a report on the state of environment was being prepared after detailed investigation. A Doon valley board had been set up to suggest scientific mining and development of the valley's natural resources. A special project had been prepared for soil conservation in the Shivalik hill ranges.

He said a comprehensive project was being implemented to protect the Taj Mahal from air pollution. A "triangular tree plantation project" had been launched in the towns of Agra, Mathura and Fatehpur-Sikri, as part of this scheme.

ENVIRONMENT PANEL CALLS FOR AFFORESTATION

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 12 Feb 83 p 9

[Text] The National Committee on Environment Planning (NCEP) has called for large-scale afforestation measures to make at least another 90 million hectares of barren land green in the country by the turn of the century, reports PTI.

Briefing newsmen in Delhi on Friday, at the end of the meeting of the NCEP, which made recommendations for a new forest policy, Ms chairman B.B. Vohra said that forest figures indicated that 75 million hectares of land were under forest cover. But, at least 40 million hectares of land were barren and lying unproductive, he said.

The recommendations will be submitted to the Agriculture Ministry to be later forwards to the Union Cabinet for its approval.

Mr Vohra said that each year one million hectare of forest land were being denuded. As against this, the Planning Commission has suggested annual vegetation cover for only 500,000 hectares of land during the sixth five-year Plan.

The committee wanted involvement of people at all levels in the afforestation drive so as to make it a national movement.

It also asked the forest department to exercise caution while felling trees. More often, various tree species are destroyed during legal felling and are replaced by only one tree variety, which could lead to ecological disaster, it noted.

The committee suggested preserving the genetic wealth of the country's flora by doubling the present land area of seven million hectares for creation of more sanctuaries, national parks and biosphere reserves.

Among other suggestions made was strengthening the research base of forest scientists, Mr Vohra said that as against 25,000 agricultural scientists, there were only 600 scientists dealing with forests. A complete ban on export of forest based products was also recommended by the committee.

CSO: 5000/7033

COUNTRY STRUGGLES AGAINST SERIOUS BRUSH FIRES

Addis Ababa THE ETHIOPIAN HERALD in English 4 Mar 83 p 7

[Text] ABIDJAN (Agencies) — The Ivory Coast is facing a life and death struggle against bush fires which are threatening to turn the West African state into a desert, a Canadian Forestry Expert said

Roger Larouche, said after examining thousands of hectares of scorched forest that the fires were a "Disaster" and he called for a three-point emergency action plan to be implemented immediately

"There is no more time for waiting and talking. It's a question of life and death for the country," said Mr. Larouche.

"Either we keep the Ivory Coast green or we abandon it to the Savannah," and the inexorable south ward drift of the Sahara desert, he added.

Mr. Larouche, who is attached to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), told a meeting of Ivorian experts that forestry protection was a "National Priority".

His rescue plan involves: Creating a national forestry protection Committee grouping planters, ministries and rural police

A campaign to persuade peasants

not to burn smallholdings for annual clearance, a traditional practice which has caused many of the fires.

Greater involvement in fire prevention is being made by big timber companies exploitation Ivory Coast's forests.

Agriculture Minister Denis Brakanon has called last month's fires which ruined forests and plantations, a "Calamity"

The fires sent cocoa and coffee prices up on international markets, although trade sources say it is too early to make a serious estimate of the drop in this year's mid-crop and next year's main crop.

In the last 25 years Ivory Coast's woodland has shrunk from 12 million hectares to less than four million and is still disappearing at the rate of 400,000 hectares a year.

Some experts say the deforestation has not contributed to this year's fires. Others disagree, saying it has caused a decline in humidity which allows fires to spread.

Other causes include an exceptionally long harmattan, a dry desert wind, and illegal hunting by setting fires to copees and waiting for game to emerge.

FURTHER DROUGHT RELIEF COULD TOTAL 100 MILLION RAND

Windhoek THE WINDHOEK ADVERTISER in English 17 Mar 83 p 3

[Text]

REACHING
recommendations for further drought relief in SWA were announced in Windhoek yesterday at the close of a two-day summit of agricultural leaders.

If the Administrator General approves these, additional aid to the farmers could total R100m.

Addressing the media on behalf of the conference which ended yesterday behind closed doors were Mr Jannie de Wet MEC for Agriculture in the White Administration, Mr Hansie van der Walt, President of the SWA Agricultural Union, Mr Christo Mouton, Chairman of the Meat Producers Association, Mr Koen Brand of Agra Co-op, and Mr K Johnny Kirsten, who spoke on behalf of the country's Karakul farmers.

"The survival of the farmers in SWA is the survival of the country itself. Our representations are for a country virtually financially on its knees," said Mr Van der Walt.

Mr De Wet: "The conditions are awful. Seventy five percent of the country is verging on disaster conditions."

As a result of the drought in South Africa, only 150 000 cattle can be exported instead of the

323 000 as was the case last year, Mr Mouton pointed out.

Mr Brand said the total debt of SWA farmers now amounted R175m.

"The present conditions require revolutionary measures and the government must lend money outside the norms laid down to enable the farmers to survive."

Numbers of smallstock are only 50 percent of what they were and the farmers in the south are financially exhausted.

"The Karakul industry is on the threshold of total collapse," said Mr Kirsten.

The recommendations passed on to the AG by the summit include three main areas:

- That existing aid schemes to farmers are maintained and extended;
- Aid should be linked to stocking of farms, with those farms carrying less stock, benefiting;
- And attention should be given to farmers' commitments in terms of their current debt load.

The summit was attended by agricultural leaders from the various second-tier Authorities, officials, Swalu, and representatives of the drought committees in the various districts.

SUCCESS OF STE ANNE SUBMARINE PIPELINE REPORTED

Victoria NATION in English 15 Feb 83 pp 1, 10

[Text]

THE treated water supply from Mahé to Ste Anne Island was turned on last Friday only six days after the laying of Seychelles' first underwater pipeline began, the Water Authority announced yesterday.

In all some four kilometres of flexible, armoured submarine pipe 110mm in diameter was laid on the seabed by the Authority.

Regular

The pipeline is now supplying Ste Anne Island and the third National Youth Service village being built there with a regular supply of water in time for the arrival of the first students this Sunday.

The pipe was laid in two operations between Cerf and Ste Anne.

In the first operation in the Cerf Passage two sections

of pipe totalling 2.5 kilometres were sunk on February 4 and 5 after being floated across from the New Port.

Four days later, on Wednesday February 9, the last section of pipe about a kilometre-and-a-half long was sunk in the Ste Anne Channel.

A temporary overland pipe links the two ends of the pipeline on Cerf.

In a press release yesterday, the Water Authority said that only minutes after the pipeline was sunk, water from Mahé was flowing into the NYS village on Ste Anne.

It added that two representatives from the Danish manufacturer of the underwater pipe who witnessed the pipe-laying operation, were very impressed by the teamwork demonstrated by the employees of the Water Authority, especially since none of them

had any previous experience in a project of this kind.

Work will now start on burying the submarine pipe in the sea floor and building a permanent overland pipe on Cerf. This is expected to be finished by September this year.

The Inner Island Water Supply Scheme, as the project is called, was designed and developed by Water Authority engineers with advice from the Danish pipeline manufacturer. All the construction work is being done by the Authority's own employees.

All boats are warned that anchoring on or near the pipeline is prohibited. The exact locations will be marked on charts at Port Office. The land ends of the pipeline are marked by white tripods topped with a red and yellow square.

DROUGHT DRIVING FARMERS TOWARDS DISASTER

Johannesburg THE CITIZEN in English 2 Mar 83 p 2

[Article by Fanie Hattingh]

[Text]

MANY farmers believe that the present country-wide drought, coupled with increasing production costs and the difficulties of marketing profitably, are inexorably driving all but the most financially independent towards disaster.

A 400 km drive through the Eastern Transvaal, where farmers are having to contend with their second crop failure in two years, reveals that many farmers are in danger of losing their farms unless they receive large scale Government aid.

One farmer openly admitted yesterday he is facing bankruptcy. He has lost R490 000 over the past two years in re-establishment of his 700 hectare farm at R350 a hectare.

Some of his neighbours, he said, were also facing the same dilemma.

A spokesman for the Rertz farmer's co-opera-

tive in the Eastern Free State described the situation there as "catastrophic."

"Maize farmers will be extremely lucky if they get a 20 percent crop, and stock-farmers will have to obtain winter fodder elsewhere — if they can afford it. Most farmers are in dire financial straights."

At Burgersdorp, a spokesman for the local co-operative said conditions in the sheep farming areas of North Eastern Cape are deteriorating at an alarming rate.

"With the meat market depressed and the wool market flooded, most farmers are deeper in debt than ever before. Drought conditions here are so severe that farmers have begun feeding their stock, especially ewes that are about to lamb, at a staggering cost."

The last significant rainfall in the area was recorded four months ago.

In the Northern Cape, Griquatad and Prieska have been declared drought-stricken areas.

Future

"If the situation does not improve," a local co-operative spokesman said yesterday, "other areas may have to be declared drought-stricken in the near future."

Farmers in the area should begin planting wheat in July, but unless 300mm of rain falls by the end of March or the beginning of April, this will be impossible.

According to a spokesman for the Natal Agricultural Union, about 80 percent of the maize crop in the province has been destroyed by the drought — the major portion of this over the past week by temperatures reacting the mid 30's.

The situation is so bad that some dairy farmers

have had to transport about 8 000 litres of water per day for their herds. Fodder is almost non-existent.

Sugar Cane

A spokesman for the South African Cane Grower's Association described their situation as "little short of disastrous".

"To aggravate the situation, some growers around Empangeni are still in debt from the drought during the 1980/81 season," he said.

• In the House of Assembly yesterday the Minister of Finance, Mr Owen Horwood disclosed that he is to ask an additional R66-million for Agriculture. This was included in Additional Appropriations Bill which was read yesterday.

GOVERNMENT TAKES ACTION ON DROUGHT

Johannesburg THE CITIZEN in English 2 Mar 83 p 4

[Text]

A SCIENTIFIC drought index for seeking ways to cope with the worsening situation in agriculture had been developed by the Department of Agriculture, the Minister of Agriculture, Mr Greyling Wentzel, said yesterday.

Speaking during the second reading debate on the Additional appropriation Bill, Mr Wentzel said all indications were that the drought conditions being experienced at present were abnormal.

"Natural resources are becoming involved and certain special steps and measures must be taken.

"The drought has also caused severe economic disruption for farmers and cooperatives, which in turn has led to a shortage in production.

"This could lead to a situation in which agriculture this year will produce less than the country's requirements.

"Fortunately we have made provision in the past to cope with the situation."

Mr Wentzel said that apart from all the other setbacks caused by the drought, it was also leading to a depopulation of the rural areas.

"The Government views the drought in a very serious light indeed and special aid projects have been developed for specific cases."

Mr Wentzel repeated that the present aid measures were not sufficient and that the Government had referred the matter to a special committee, which would report before the end of the month.

Apart from the short-term solutions which had to be sought, the Government would also have to look at the long-term situation in the agricultural industry.

One particular aspect which would have to be looked at again was nature conservation and the Government would have to re-evaluate the entire agricultural industry.

Mr Wentzel made special mention of the positive attitude of farmers generally during these trying times.

Mr E K Moorecroft (PFP Albany) described the present drought conditions as the worst experienced this century while Mr R W Hardingham (NRP Mooi River) expressed his party's appreciation of the Government's efforts to alleviate the situation.

"But," he said, "we need better longterm planning in agriculture."

The Bill was read a second time.

SOUTH AFRICA

BRIEFS

CONTINGENCY WATER PLANS--A master plan is ready to supply water to Pretoria and Verwoerdburg if necessary--but official sources both expect and hope that it will not have to be put into action. A spokesman for the Department of Environmental Affairs said in Pretoria yesterday that a special plan to provide the two areas with water envisaged the use of the Sterkfontein Dam, which was at present at 83 percent of capacity. [Text] [Johannesburg THE CITIZEN in English 2 Mar 83 p 12]

CSO: 5000/116

RELIEF FOOD AID NEEDED FOR DROUGHT-STRICKEN CHIBI

Harare THE HERALD in English 21 Feb 83 pp 1, 3

[Article by Davison Maruziva]

[Text] **ABOUT 60 000 people in the drought-stricken Chibi district — more than half the area's population — are now dependent on drought relief food aid.**

There are 108 656 people in Chibi according to last year's census but the majority of the relief aid recipients are in Gaza II ward in the north and Maputo ward in Chibi South.

The two wards are receiving more than 3 700 bags of maize a month.

The effect of drought in the whole of the Masvingo province, which covers Chibi, Bikita, Chiredzi, Masvingo, Mwenzi, Gutu and Zaka, is that work on other development projects, such as the construction of major dams, has been halted in favour of boreholes.

But once this programme has been accomplished, emphasis is to revert once more to the construction of large dams because they have the advantages of providing other activities, such as fishing and irrigation.

A spokesman for the Chibi District Council said 75 new boreholes had been drilled since the drought began making itself felt in the area, bringing the total to 96. Work on another eight would soon start. Borehole drilling has concentrated on

schools and shopping centres rather than on villages. The result has been a heavy demand for the water from these sources, leading to queues.

But other people have not waited to rely on the boreholes only. They have begun digging in the Turgwana riverbed for water.

The big problem has been that as the people scrambled and queued for their daily share of water, cattle have been left to fend for themselves, often resulting in deaths.

For those animals in areas to adjacent commercial farms, there is hope. The local authority has sought permission for communal cattle to graze on commercial farms.

A few of the communal people will benefit from a programme to allow 1 000 animals into 22 000 hectares of commercial farming land next to Nyajena communal land.

However, some people have foreseen the possibilities of greater losses if the drought does not ease. Cde Timothy Tsiki-mi from the Ngundu area has sold all but two of his cattle. Ngundu is one of the areas in Masvingo where there is still some grass.

He is now concentrating on making and selling handicrafts to ward off hunger, or bar-

tering them for maize meal.

Most people felt that more maize should be distributed to various centres in the area to enable them to buy it at affordable prices. A two-litre container of maize sells for \$3.50, and that, people say, is too expensive.

But hope sometimes is a cruel manipulator. It misleads one into believing that the impossible is attainable and that is the predicament of Cde Samuel Mapuranga from near Ngundu. Last week he was still ploughing and sowing.

However, he is not the only one who is hoping against the seemingly impossible. The belt stretching from Ngundu to Nyajena shows freshly ploughed fields.

The National Farmers' Association of Zimbabwe president, Cde Robinson Gapare, said ploughing and sowing six weeks from the end of the rainy season was a clear indication of the extent of the tragedy and the desperation to which the farmers have been driven by the drought.

Nyajena and Ngundu are much better placed than Chibi, although they have suffered from the drought. But the terrain in Ngundu is made up of hills, many of them granite and does not offer enough land for grazing.

In these areas people may just be able to harvest the groundnut crop. It is the only crop that has survived the worst of the drought.

Masvingo provincial officials say the one lesson the drought has taught the people in the province is that it is essential to co-operate with their neighbours in using available resources.

The Deputy Minister of Water Resources and Development, Cde Joseph Kaparadza, who is touring the provinces to assess the drought, said Manicaland was a disaster area.

The severity of the drought there was worse than in any other province in the country with 90 percent of the crops a complete write-off.

"Grazing in communal lands is also a complete write-off unless there is late germination of grass," he said.

Crops in Masvingo province and particularly in the communal lands, were a write-off. Grazing land had become denuded and would be lost unless there was late germination.

Masvingo's provincial veterinary officer, Dr John Adamson, said the only hope seemed to lie in selling animals and destocking.

"At the moment the commercial farmers are looking for any means available to off-load their livestock."

Last year an effort had been made to persuade the communal farmers to destock but the response was not good enough. It was hoped that this year the exercise would get a better response.

Efforts to resuscitate the beef industry had suffered a major setback.

The provincial head of Agritex, Cde James Ma-

svaya, said the present conditions in the province and particularly in Chibwa were partly a result of unconserved land and a lack of vegetational cover.

"The seriousness of this drought is not because it did not rain last year and this year. It has been caused by a number of things. The fall in the underground water table is a result of soil loss and siltation."

His officials, he said, were encouraging people in the area to sell their cattle and the first cattle sale in the area this year was expected to be held this week.

The overall assessment of drought in the country was that Manicaland was the worst-hit, followed by Matabeleland South and then the Midlands, Cde Kaparadza said.

He said that the Ministry of Water Resources and Development and the Ministry of Local Government and Town Planning, through the District Development Fund were undertaking extensive drilling programmes and constructing dams to alleviate the effects.

There were about 8 000 boreholes in the country now and further extensive studies on underground water resources in the various provinces were also being undertaken by donor countries. A Japanese team of underground water experts is in Masvingo while another from Denmark is in the Midlands.

The president of the NFAZ said if people were running short of food today it was because they had all gravitated their production towards cash crops.

For him and fellow farmers, the present predicament

had revealed the need to grow traditional crops, like rapoko, alongside cash crops.

"We are also being taught a lesson to store sufficient grain to keep families until the following harvest. There is also a need to consider seriously growing crops only in the areas in which they are best suited."

Cde Gapare, who was in one of the areas in Chibwa on Friday, said that for areas without any food the villagers should organise themselves into small groups and then approach transporters to get maize for them from the Grain Marketing Board depots. The few shops in the area could not be expected to fulfil the demand for maize.

It was also likely to be cheaper for the communal people if they formed these groups and ordered their requirements in bulk. But he strongly advised fellow farmers to sell most of their cattle now.

Cde Gapare called Masvingo a disaster area and said about 60 percent of agricultural inputs had been wasted and lost because there had been no further rains after the first October showers.

But he also said that traditional water reservoirs in the area were being threatened by siltation resulting from ploughing and encroaching on land near rivers.

It was also high time, he felt, that small grazing schemes became a common feature of communal lands. But as some animals continue to die and some wells dry up, people hope that things will get better in the remaining six weeks, to the end of the rainy season, and save them from the outrages of a full-scale drought.

GIANT STORMS HIT BALTIC COAST

Vilnius TIESA [TRUTH] in Lithuanian 13 Feb 83 p 4

[Article by Prof. Dr. Vytautas Gudelis, director, Lithuanian SSR Academy of Sciences Geography Department and Baltic Coast Dynamics and Geology Laboratory: "The Coast in the Wake of a Storm"; from the column "The Elements and Us"]

[Text] The autumn storm which in 1967 devastated our coast, and the consequences of the 1981 oil tanker accident were hardly erased from our memory when the Baltic coast was hit by a new natural disaster. In the second half of January and the first days of February the sea was raging from powerful storms.

During the worst part of the storm the waves reached the height of 7 to 8 meters on the open sea. At the approach to the shores they decreased to 3 meters, but even at this level they were still raging. The resulting tides forced the sea water to flow through the Klaipėda and Baltyisk Straits into the Kuršiai and Aistė Sounds. This caused the water to rise very high in some places—as high as to 2 to 3 meters above the normal sea level. The tidal wave moved up the Nemunas and Prieglius Rivers, overflowing the banks and flooding the lowland areas.

In some places the winds and waves caused the sea level itself to rise by almost 2 meters. The waves were pounding the beaches and damaging the dunes and steep slopes. Hurricane force winds were blowing with the velocity of 30 meters per second, and the velocity of some gusts reached almost 40 meters per second, or 144 kilometers per hour.

The Lithuanian coast suffered great physical damage. The shores of the sea and the sound and the protective ridges of their dunes were washed out in some sections; some beach structures were damaged or destroyed; and the Palanga promenade jetty was also considerably damaged. Seashore forest roads and communication lines were damaged, and in some places the storm literally uprooted the forests.

The shoreline north of Palanga has suffered most—in the Kunigiškiai - Vėnagupė sector, and also in the long strip of the shore going south from the Birutė hill almost to Giruliai. Here the dune ridge was washed out down to 15 meters

in separate places, and the beaches lost their already thin cover of sand. Even a layer of peat became visible here and there. Instead of smooth sand, layers of coarse sand and gravel have appeared, and near the Dutch Hat northward from Giruliai the steep shore slope receded considerably.

In the Kuršiai banks section which belongs to our republic the 18 kilometer long Smiltynė-Alksnynė and Nida sectors have suffered most from these storms. Here the ridge of protective dune on the beach was destroyed in some places, leaving breaches up to 15 meters wide.

However, the storm waves did the greatest damage to the southern part of the Kuršiai banks seashore. Near the Lesnoje community the seashore receded by 15 to 20 meters. Kuršiai banks are at their narrowest in this location, their width reaching barely 380 meters. The biggest surprise of the latest hurricane force storm, however, was when north of Zelenogradsk the waves broke through a rather low dune ridge, made a several dozen meters wide channel and rushed through it into the sound, on their way uprooting the trees and crossing the lowland and the marshes.

The new channel lasted several days while the storm continued, and thus out of a peninsula, the Kuršiai Sound for several days became an island.

Cape Ventė has also experienced physical damage, as well as the Nemunas delta and the shores of Kuršiai banks. The Ventė cape tip itself suffered badly, where the shore of the sound was breached as much as 15 meters. The Gobštas and Bulvikis capes were also washed out and the bank road at Juodkrantė was even flooded. Because of a high water level in the sound, the Nida port piers were covered by water.

The winds also considerably damaged the appearance of the drifting dunes on the Kuršiai banks, where the shifting sands created several tiny valleys and gullies. The sliding slope of the dunes moved some 15 meters forward in some places, covering the shoreline of the banks and dumping the sand into the sound. In many places the heavy waves undermined the slopes of the drifting dunes, causing huge amounts of sand to fall into the sound.

The preliminary estimates made by the Lithuanian SSR Academy of Sciences experts indicate that in the coastal areas belonging to the Lithuanian territory alone the shores lost about 1.5 million tons of soil. To imagine this, we would need a fantastic 250 kilometer long train to transport such an amount of sand!

The sand washed out from beaches and dunes is carried by the waves deeper into the sea or spread along the shoreline. When the storm subsides, only an insignificant part of the sand is returned to the same areas of the shore.

How, then, could we at least partially eliminate the consequences of such storms that swept over our coast? Ideally, it would be by "restoring" those parts of the shores that were damaged most, especially in the areas of Palanga and Nida beaches. Still, we would not be able to ensure their long range resistance to devastating storms. There is now a real need to start

planning capital projects which would effectively protect the seashores, such as the construction of jetties to hold the dragging solids; breakwaters and other hydrotechnical structures; as well as planning the restoration of the protective dune ridges on the beaches.

The question arises, of course, why natural disasters are becoming more frequent and whether similar hurricane force storms were also happening in the past. Based on historical data we have reasons to believe that similar natural disasters had descended upon our coast several times. From the middle of the 15th century to the present time, the sea crossed the banks into the sound as many as eight times--in 1441, 1497, 1509, 1791, 1818, 1822, 1830, and 1895. In the Zelenogradsk sector of Kuršiai banks two high floods were recorded in 1874 and 1889 when a large part of the banks was flooded by the waters from the sound. Particularly violent storms and gales were raging on the banks in 1497, 1791, 1818, 1822, 1830, and 1895. Straits and beaches of various sizes were formed, which stayed there for a few and even several days, as historical documents indicate.

From these documents we can also determine that the 19th century was one of the most stormy on our coast. As many as seven devastating storms passed through it then, and in this century at least some eight to nine more storms ravaged the Lithuanian coast.

This year's gales and storms are, then, not an exceptional natural phenomenon. The fact, however, that in the last 20 years hurricane force storms became more frequent and occur again after a shorter period of time than before provides a good reason for concern.

In recent decades the change of contrasting air masses became more frequent. This indicates a possible destabilization of the macroprocesses of atmospheric circulation. Whether this destabilization is temporary, and whether its pattern will show a trend, is difficult to determine. The synopsis of this winter's situation does not assure that similar gales and storms will not occur again even in the nearest future. This applies even more to longer range prognoses.

The republic's scientists and Lithuanian SSR hydrometeorological service experts are trying to forecast more accurately the repetition of similar natural disasters, and are preparing concrete projects for effective protection of the coastal environment and its treasures from the fury of nature's forces.

EARTHQUAKES, BLIZZARDS HIT CENTRAL ASIA, FAR EAST ISLANDS

Earthquake in Central Asia

LD031128 Moscow TASS in English 1102 GMT 3 Mar 83

[Text] Dushanbe, 3 Mar (TASS)--An earthquake, the epicentre of which was at the boundary of Tajikistan, Kirghizia and Uzbekistan (Soviet republics in Central Asia), 40 kilometers away from the town of Isfara, occurred today at 07.45, Moscow time. According to the seismic station "Dushanbe," the magnitude of the earth jolts was five points at the epicentre. A four-point jolt was recorded in Shuraba [spelling as received] and a three-point one in Isfara. There is no loss of life or serious damage.

Kazakhstan Earth Tremor

LD131831 Moscow TASS in English 1818 GMT 13 Mar 83

[Text] Alma-Ata, 13 Mar (TASS)--An about three-point tremor was felt today by residents of Alma-Ata, the capital of Kazakhstan. The earth tremor was of a somewhat higher intensity in its epicenter--42 kilometres south-east of the city in the axial part of the Zailiiski Alatau Ridge in an unpopulated area. The earth tremor caused neither casualties nor destructions.

Turkmenistan Earthquake

LD141823 Moscow TASS in English 1752 GMT 14 Mar 83

[Tex] Ashkhabad, 14 Mar (TASS)--Seismic stations on the seismology institute of the Academy of Sciences of Soviet Turkmenia (a Soviet central Asian republic) has registered today an earthquake, whose epicentre was at a distance of 30-40 kilometres southeast of Nebit-Dag.

The instruments registered two earth tremors--the first at 14 hours 55 minutes, and the second at 15 hours 12 minutes of Moscow time. In the epicentre the force of the earthquake reached seven, in Kum-dag--five, in Nebit-Dag--four. There have been neither casualties nor serious damage.

Earthquake Near Shikotan Island

LD100952 Moscow TASS in English 0924 GMT 10 Mar 83

[Text] Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, 10 Mar (TASS)--The seismic stations of the Sakhalin and the Kuriles today recorded an earth tremor with its epicentre 120 kilometres south-east of the island of Shikotan. The instruments recorded a six-point tremor on the Shikotan Island, and a 4-point underground tremor--in Yuzhno-Kurilsk, on the Kunashir Island. There are no destructions.

Cyclone, Blizzards in Kamchatka

PM161705 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 16 Mar 83 First Edition p 4

[TASS correspondent report: "Hurricane Over Kamchatka"]

[Text] Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy, 15 Mar--A fierce cyclone, which arose off the shores of Japan, has hit Kamchatka with hurricane-force winds and snow. The elements started raging during the night and continued until midday today. In various parts the wind speed reached 35-50 meters a second.

Damage has been caused to the oblast's national economy: roofs have been torn off some buildings, pylons of urban lighting power lines have been bent, and the supply of heat and water to houses has been disrupted.

The peninsula's inhabitants joined the struggle against the elements. Emergency repair groups worked hard. A damaged power line from the city tets was repaired. Interruptions in the power supply were promptly eliminated.

In places avalanches of snow descending from the hills closed streets in the oblast center, but these obstacles were quickly removed too.

The cyclone which brought the hurricane is gradually moving toward the Bering Sea.

Sakhalin Island Tremor

LD171334 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1223 GMT 17 Mar 83

[Text] Yuzhnosakhalinsk, 17 Mar (TASS)--Seismic stations of the island of Sakhalin registered a underground tremor today at 0311 Moscow time [0011 GMT]. As the instruments showed, the strength of the tremor in Aleksandrovsk-Sakhalinskiy reached 4 points. The epicenter of the earthquake was located 80 km north-east of the city, and it was also felt in a number of inhabited places of the northern part of the island. No damage was caused.

CSO: 5000/73

BLIZZARD IN ARMENIA; DAMAGE NOTED

Hurricane Winds Hit Baku

PM141149 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 10 Mar 83 morning edition p 6

[TASS correspondent report: "Hurricane-Force Wind"]

[Text] Baku, 9 Mar--Complex problems were posed to Baku's citizens by the hurricane-force wind which swept over the city yesterday and died down only this morning. Its gust, reaching 35 meters per second, uprooted trees, brought down power lines and tore roofs from houses.

A huge wave cut the bunker ship "Yupiter" from its moorings and drove it toward the shore. Only a few minutes later, however, the rescue ship "Goryachiy" sped to intercept the damaged ship. The vessel's crew headed by Capt V. Zinyuk managed to intercept the "Yupiter" and bring it safely to its moorage.

The hurricane-force wind did not disturb the continuous work of oilfields, oil refineries and other enterprises in the city.

The meteorologists issued a timely warning of the impending danger. Emergency repair brigades are repairing the damage caused by the storm.

Storm Damage Reported

PM141147 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 8 Mar 83 first edition p 6

[Report by unnamed PRAVDA correspondent: "When the Blizzard Struck"]

[Text] Yerevan, 7 Mar--Nature has brought Armenia another surprise.

There has been snowfalls of up to 2 meters in depth and a strong blizzard has struck the republic's territory.

Wind speeds have exceeded 25 meters a second.

"Dear Comrades," Republican Television warned, "the roads to Leninakan and Korovakan have been closed to traffic...."

The blizzard was a natural disaster for those already intransit. Along the stretch of the Yerevan-Leninakan Highway running through Talinskiy Rayon visibility was suddenly reduced to zero and a snowstorm swathed express buses and cars in white.

"The whole adult population of the villages of Landzhik, Mastara and Katnakhpyur sprang to the aid of snowbound travelers." P. Khichitryan, first secretary of Talinskiy Raykom, said: "The evacuation of passengers went on right through the night...."

On these very days--4 and 5 March--I was in Korovakan.

As much as 70 cm of snow fell. We were unable to reach the Spitayskiy Pass even in an all-terrain vehicle.

We had to turn back and make a detour through a thick blanket of fog in the direction of Dilizhan.

I then found that that a number of old livestock buildings had collapsed under the weight of snow in Aparanskiy, Talinskiy and a number of other rayons. Power and communications lines were down.

Throughout the disaster area headquarters have been set up to direct the clearing-up operation. There were no casualties.

"The active atmospheric processes," G. Kodzhoyan, acting chief of the Armenian SSR Hydrometeorological and Environmental Control Administration, explains, "are caused by the intrusion of Arctic air masses. When you consider the irregularity of Armenia's mountain terrain and the presence of large hollows, resulting in static cold air, the reason for the metamorphosis of nature in the territory of the republic, the average height of which is around 1,800 meters above sea level, becomes clear."

CSO: 5000/74

PROTECTING ENVIRONMENT OF LAKE BAIKAL

Moscow MOSCOW NEWS in English No 9, 6-13 Mar 83 (signed to press 22 Feb 83)
p 10

[Article by Vladimir Smirnov]

[Excerpts]

Some 20 years ago a pulp factory was built on the south-eastern shore of the lake. Industry is making rapid headway in the area around Baikal. Our correspondent discusses the unique lake's conservation problems and its future with Grigory GALAZY, director of the Baikal Limnological Institute of the Siberian Department of the USSR Academy of Sciences, and a Corresponding Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

Q: What makes Baikal a natural phenomenon of global significance?

A: The nature of this territory combines the blue of the ocean, the crystal-clear transparency of Swiss lakes, the splendor of the sparkling snow-capped peaks of the Pamirs, the beauty of the sand dunes of the Baltic coast and the lushness of Alpine meadows. Temperatures range from -30 degrees in winter to +30 degrees in summer. Swirling sands, stalactite caves, thundering waterfalls, mirages, rock drawings by primitive artists - all of this is Baikal.

Baikal is 23,000 cubic kilometres of crystal-clear water with a low mineral content. The Baikal epishura - a practically invisible crustacean - passes the lake water through its system, efficiently cleaning it of plankton, algae and bacteria.

Q: Extensive research is conducted in the Lake Baikal area. What can be said about the results?

A: Baikal draws the attention of scientists in various fields investigating the most diverse aspects of the lake's ecosystem. Regardless of who first defined Baikal as a scientific moving ground of international significance, the statement is becoming increasingly true with each passing year.

A few examples. The surface of Baikal's cold waters in combination

with the high surrounding mountain ridges provides exceptionally favourable conditions for astronomical observations. Therefore a large solar vacuum telescope is being built on the lake's shore for research in the field of solar earth physics.

A group of American scientists headed by physiologist Robert Elsner, Professor of the Marine Sciences Institute of the University of Alaska, carried out a series of experiments on seals - the one mammal in Lake Baikal. Elsner was interested in the seal's ability to stay underwater for an extended period - an hour and more - without surfacing for air. The professor hopes that his research will help produce biopreparations for the preventive treatment of heart disease.

Baikal is recognized as the only suitable site in the USSR for the construction of a station for deep-water detection and registration of muons and neutrinos - the elementary superhigh energy particles coming from outer space. The ability of these particles to pass through celestial bodies, including our planet, will be of help in the study of the structure of the universe and the processes taking place in it.

In recent years Baikal has been under the constant observation of scientists. The 10th International Limnological Congress recognized the

lake as the most thoroughly studied of the planet's inland water resources. However, Baikal still has plenty of enigmas in store for scientists. Hardly a year passes without a veritable scientific sensation.

Q: What measures have been taken to protect the environment of the lake and its shores, especially since the construction of a pulp factory there?

A: As you remember, there was much heated discussion in this country in connection with the construction of the factory. I give Soviet journalists and writers credit for their important role in moulding public opinion.

As a result, the CPSU Central Committee and the Soviet government passed one resolution after another on the protection of nature. These resolutions concerned Baikal, the Caspian Sea, the Azov-Black Sea basin and the Volga. Today questions of environmental protection have been elevated to the rank of state law by the Constitution of the USSR.

Quite a few environmental protection measures have been put into effect on Baikal in recent years. The felling of timber on the shores of the lake within a 50 km radius is prohibited, as is the free floating of timber on rivers flowing into it. Hunting is strictly regulated. It is prohibited to build industrial enterprises with harmful wastes. The estuaries of the rivers flowing into the lake have been cleared of sunken timber.

Unique purification installations have been built at the Baikal pulp and paper factory. However, even with the superhigh quality of industrial waste purification, ecologists are not satisfied. They have suggested that the enterprises be switched over to a new, wasteless production scheme.

The pulp and paper factory is not the only problem in the protection of Baikal, nor is it the most important one. The problems of the unique lake are now being dealt with by the country's numerous research institutions, which must establish the norms

of permissible concentrations of present and possible future pollutants. An analysis of the influence of the Baikal-Amur Railway on the northern extreme of the lake is being made, and the question of the optimal tourist load for Baikal is being studied along with many other issues.

The protection of Baikal cannot be limited to the lake itself. It must be extended to include the entire watershed where the rivers and rivulets flowing into Baikal begin. And this is an area of 500,000 sq km, as large as the whole of Italy. The Baikal zone is rich in forests of the highest quality and unique mineral deposits.

The plan for the creation of a protected zone around the waters of Baikal has been worked out through the joint efforts of economists and ecologists. It is expected to be realized by the year 2000. In the plan, the objective need for the development of the productive forces and for economic and social progress on this territory is emphasized because it holds an important place in the country's national economy. The objective of the plan is to eliminate or reduce to a minimum the contradictions between the development of the productive forces and the maintenance of the ecological balance.

Q: Do you not regret having devoted your life to such an intricate problem as the protection of Baikal?

A: If I were not an optimist I would have dropped this problem long ago. And as you see, my optimism is justified. The problem of protecting this unique natural complex was placed on the level of a nationwide task in due time. Therefore, in the collection of our institute's museum there is not a single representative of fauna or flora of which it can be said: "Alas, it used to be in the lake before." The preservation of Baikal is a question of conscience. In the future, this natural complex will become a recreation zone with unique properties, a large international tourism centre and a scientific proving ground of international significance.

Vladimir SMIRNOV

BRIEFS

TAJIK EARTHQUAKE--Dushanbe [no date given]--The Dushanbe seismological station has registered another earthquake. It occurred 15 February at 1423 local time. The epicenter of the underground disturbance was about 60 kilometers south of Kulyab. Equipment at Kulyaba, Nurek and Dushanbe registered the force of the tremors at 3 points on the 12-point scale and 4 points at the epicenter. This was the sixth noticeable earthquake registered in Tajikistan since the start of 1983. Just as during the previous tremors, there were no injuries and no damage to buildings. [By V. Surkov] [Text] [PM161731 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Feb 83 Morning Edition p 3]

PACIFIC EARTHQUAKE--Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, February 26, TASS--The seismic stations of Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands registered a quake in the Pacific 100 kilometres south of the Paramushir Island. A quake with a magnitude of five points was felt at Cape Vasilyev, the southernmost extremity of the island, at 18 hours 13 minutes local time. A four-point tremor was registered in the Severo-Kurilsk settlement. No destruction was caused. [Text] [LD280404 Moscow TASS in English 1300 GMT 26 Feb 83]

CSO: 5000/69

OFFICIAL ENVIRONMENT REPORTS OF SWEDEN, FINLAND CONTRASTED

Helsinki HUFVUDSTADSBLADET in Swedish 15 Feb 83 p 3

[Article by Johan Ulfvens]

[Text] An important measure of the quality of life is the condition of the physical environment. The citizens of both Finland and Sweden now have an opportunity to form an overall picture of the situation. The two countries have come out with reports on the state of the environment at almost the same time ("Suomen ympariston tila" [in Finland] and "Blue and Yellow Environment" [in Sweden]). And while they differ in form and content, both give one a gnawing feeling of uneasiness: environmental protection has so far been a matter of superficial cosmetics, while the basic problems have remained unsolved.

The Finnish report was compiled by Parliament's Environmental Council and the Ministry of Interior. It is the sequel to the first and less comprehensive report that was published in 1972, and it is based on information provided by various institutions and government agencies covering the years from 1972 to 1980. As is usual with government reports, its technical presentation is matter-of-fact but dull. The coldly descriptive text is accompanied by a number of diagrams and tables.

Broad Survey

As far as content is concerned, the report is unquestionably a broad survey of the state of the environment--the most all-around report ever published in Finland. It begins with a brief description of Finland's geographical position, population, and economy. This is followed by chapters on the natural resources and their utilization, land use planning, the various sectors of environmental protection, and activities related to such protection--that is, idealistic organizations and international cooperation. Surrounding the whole thing is a collection of facts which, while not complete, are at least illuminating, with the result that the report can easily be used as a reference work by anyone who is interested.

The factual content is good on the whole, but a number of gaps and shortcomings are easy to find. On some points, the report is defective and out of date (for example, on the subjects of air pollution, heavy metals, and the protection of nature), while on others it is almost cynical in the way it glosses over things

by directly or indirectly minimizing, for example, the effects of air pollutants and pesticides on human health. A number of important questions are not dealt with at all: nuclear power is touched on only in connection with radiation protection, while problems related to the working environment and the psychological effects of monotonous technical environments are not dealt with at all.

No Solutions Proposed

The biggest shortcoming in the report, however, is its lack of any specific proposals as to how the environmental problems should be attacked in the future and its failure to take a position on whether or not we should be satisfied with the results of environmental protection. The latter fault should be seen as a consequence of the fact that the country has no clear environmental policy that could serve as a standard. Judgment must therefore be passed by the reader, as it was in this newspaper's editorial on 13 December 1982.

But personally, I am of two minds. Every positive trend of development seems to be accompanied by a negative one. It is pointed out at great length that the forested area and the supply of timber have increased, but the fact is that that progress occurred at the cost of berry production in the drained bogs. And when one considers that berries can be worth more than timber production itself, it is doubtful that there has been any gain at all. To take another example, the banning of DDT and the declining use of PCB have brought an almost twofold increase in the agricultural use of plant and insect poisons. We currently spray an average of almost 850 grams per hectare of field every year, and since 1953, every Finnish field has received a poison dose totaling 11 kilograms.

Air quality can also be taken as an example: the air has become better in Helsinki, for example, but at the same time, the air in 40 localities is bordering on the unhealthy, and in 70 localities, airborne pollutants have damaged a total of 1,200 square kilometers of forest.

Shortcomings in Our Lifestyle Need Analysis

A hundred similar examples could be produced. And they all originate in the unfortunate fact that official environmental protection still deals with environmental problems as though they were technical and economic questions. That approach produces shilly-shallying on the one hand and discussion on the other instead of leading to an analysis of the basic shortcomings in our lifestyle and our production apparatus (for example, an increasingly mobile lifestyle creates a demand for energy and results in air pollutants and noise). It is easy to adopt cruetertechnologies which, in an expanding economy, only increase the consumption of energy, but more natural technologies can eliminate problems without creating new ones. In other words, the report is quite superficial and is characterized by conventional thinking.

In the Swedish report--"Blue and Yellow Environment"--the conventional has had to give way, at least in appearance. In that report, a large public council has done impressive work in an attempt to spike up and popularize its material. The result is a book in which the form brings the content to life. "Blue and Yellow Environment" invites individual study; it is easy to read and well arranged.

In addition, the content of "Blue and Yellow Environment" is more oriented toward the individual and critical. It deserves credit, for example, for its handling of the effects of chemicals and poor working environments on human health, and it dares to point out conflicts between various interests, an example being the environmental effects of private automobiles. Other chapters worthy of mention are those dealing with acidification, water conservation, environmental poisons, and the environmental effects of agriculture and forestry.

Alternatives and Discussions

There is no out-and-out preaching about what ought to be done, but "Blue and Yellow Environment" does indicate several alternatives, and it attempts to penetrate the difficulty involved in measuring environmental quality at all. An entire chapter is devoted precisely to the assessment of environmental quality and argues quite correctly that how good or bad one considers the situation to be depends on one's value judgments. Discussions of the subject are worthwhile, but they are incomplete if one does not account for the different and overlapping ideologies that govern man's relations with nature: utilitarianism, humanism, or ecologism. In any case, the antagonisms between differing value judgments become concrete when a standard of living advocate and a supporter of the quality of life are allowed to cross swords and illustrate the phrases and arguments that everyone may encounter in daily life.

Another vivid contribution is the interview with Tage Erlander, who admits that he now regards environmental protection as being "almost as overshadowing a problem as the employment issue." Bigwig Rolf Edberg was also interviewed for the book, and he reiterated something which ought to be self-evident but for which it is very difficult to gain a hearing, namely, "that no real economy is possible unless it is built on an ecological foundation."

All in all, "Blue and Yellow Environment" is a book that makes one a little envious on Finland's behalf. When will our authorities learn to present their reports equally tastefully?

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ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP SURVIVES ECONOMIC CRISIS

Was Near Bankruptcy

Stockholm 7 DAGAR in Swedish 18 Feb 83 p 17

[Text] Alternative Sweden has now been hit by the economic crisis too. The Environmental League is threatened with bankruptcy. The amount involved, a mere 200,000 kronor, is ridiculously small when compared to the national debt.

The deficit was incurred in connection with the popular referendum on nuclear power. There was no time to think about finances--all the resources were poured into backing the negative alternative, the league wrote in the latest issue of ATOMBULLETINEN--one of the few alternative publications remaining after the league's own organ, VECKANS EKO, went bankrupt a few months ago.

The industrial slump seems to have reduced interest in environmental issues. The calls for more controlled rivers and permanent nuclear power intensified.

Friends of small-scale solutions and a better environment have asked themselves in a spirit of self-criticism whether the league was really needed. But it was quickly decided that it was--"as usual, there are lots of ideas but only limited resources," as the league's representatives wrote in ATOMBULLETINEN. A nationwide collection campaign is planned to meet the payment demanded by the sheriff.

Members Save Organization

Stockholm SVENSKA DAGBLADET in Swedish 26 Feb 83 p 6

[Text] The Environmental League has been saved and it will not have to go into bankruptcy. At its annual meeting over the weekend, the league was able to gather the economic pledges from members that were needed.

"We needed 1,000 members to pledge 200 kronor apiece. At the annual meeting, 992 members made pledges," said committee member Astrid Soderbergh-Widding.

The Environmental League has had economic problems ever since the popular referendum on nuclear power. When the publication VECKANS EKO--which the league distributed along with other environmental organizations--went bankrupt last year, the crisis became acute.

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CS0: 5000/2558

USE OF DIOXINS FOR DEPOLIATING FORESTS PROTESTED

Stockholm DAGENS NYHETER in Swedish 14 Mar 83 p 22

[Text] At the same time as Forestry Week opens in Stockholm on Sunday, environmental activists from Varmland will demonstrate outside People's House. The protest concerns the Stora Kopparberg forestry company's subsidiary in Canada, which wants to use an agent in defoliating forests that is identical with the Agent Orange that was used in the Vietnam War.

The controversial herbicide is a mixture of 2,4,5-T and 2,4-D. 2,4,5-T, a hormone agent, contains dangerous dioxins and was banned in Sweden in 1977. 2,4-D is still used in Swedish forestry. In the United States and in parts of Canada, a mixture of the preparations has long been used.

In the Canadian province of Nova Scotia, the Micmac Indians and small farmers have gone to court to stop Stora Kopparberg's totally-owned subsidiary, Nova Scotia Forest Industries (NSFI) from using the chemical.

In Sweden, protests are being conducted by the Environment Party, the Swedish-Indian League and the Torsby Environmental Group at the same time as delegates from Sweden's forestry branch hold a weeklong conference on the future of the forestry industry.

Miscarriages

"They want to spray a beautiful recreation area and we know that the control chemical is about the same as Agent Orange," said Monica Muller of the Torsby Environmental Group.

Professor Christoffer Rappe of Umea University does research on environmental poisons and recently returned from an international conference in Vietnam, where the damage done by Agent Orange was discussed.

"The Vietnamese claim that the number of cases of liver cancer increased after the American troops launched Operation Ranchhand in which Agent Orange was used to defoliate the forests. They also say they noted more miscarriages and an increase in fetal deformities.

"However, Swedish studies of this chemical have not produced the same results," he said.

"It is clear that the control agent they want to use in Nova Scotia is the same mixture as Agent Orange, but with a lower dioxin content. I view this as primarily a risk to the people who do the spraying."

Stora Kopparberg executive director Erik Sundblad told the new agency TT that the company did not have the slightest intention of giving in. He is convinced that the trial in Sydney, Nova Scotia in May will vindicate the company.

Joakim Hermelin is a certified forester who has been working in the forestry sector in Canada for 10 years. He has seen the NSFI forests and has an entirely different picture of them than that held by the handful of demonstrators protesting outside People's House. He described the NSFI forests as a natural catastrophe in need of rapid intervention.

"There are square miles of dead trees infested with insects. The company acquired the right to the land in order to practice forest management according to certain principles, but then public opinion put a stop to using this chemical for control purposes," he said.

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CSO: 5000/2558

SWEDEN

BRIEFS

PHENO-OXIDES 'POORLY TESTED'--Pheno-oxides and several other old chemical control agents have been so poorly tested that it is impossible to say if they are carcinogenic or have other long-range effects. This was the conclusion reached by a state investigative committee. But this hardly comes as news to environmental activists or the Product Control Board of the Environmental Protection Agency, according to the agency's publication, MILJOAKTUELLT. The publication refers to an as yet unpublished report from a working group that comes under the "Investigation into the Use of Chemical Control Methods in Agriculture and Forestry, Etc." The group has studied the documentation on certain registered chemical controls that is available at the Environmental Protection Agency's Product Control Board. [Text] [Stockholm SVENSKA DAGBLADET in Swedish 2 Mar 83 p 17] 6578

INCREASE IN 'ENVIRONMENTAL CATASTROPHES'--Around 400 major natural catastrophes, including only those with extreme consequences for the country in the way of great personal and property damage, have occurred in this century. The statistics show that the number per year is rising. The type of risk is ranked in this order: floods, 52 percent, earthquakes, 17 percent, storms, 15 percent, droughts, 7 percent, volcanic eruptions, 3 percent and others, 6 percent. The increase in the number of catastrophes can best be illustrated by the fact that at the beginning of the century, there was an average of three major catastrophes a year. The figure is now 15. Some of the main reasons for this development include the world population growth, the concentration of people and property in big cities, the high standard of living, living in especially exposed areas and technical development in the direction of more risky procedures. (Source: FORSAKRINGSTIDNINGEN) [Text] [Stockholm SVENSKA DAGBLADET in Swedish 2 Mar 83 p 10] 6578

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